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ABSTRACT

In the 1984-85 school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) began to actively encourage Pennsylvania school districts to reform their teacher supervision/evaluation (TS/E) procedures. To obtain data necessary for developing TS/E models, the PDE commissioned Research for Better Schools (RBS) to conduct a study of five school districts with TS/E systems. Three districts--Abington Heights, Pittsburgh, and Upper Perkiomen--used Madeline Hunter-based models. Suburban East Penn and rural Tamaqua were selected for their evolving alternative systems. Data were collected through onsite interviews with a total of 20 central office staff, 37 administrators, and 194 teachers; document analysis; and followup interviews with selected district officials. This document presents the five case studies, each of which provides information on school background; program development and implementation; program funding; staff development; evaluation procedures; the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and district staff; and implications and issues. Contains 14 references. (LMI)

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Case Studies of Five Teacher Supervision/Evaluation Systems

October 1985

A Study Conducted in Cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Education

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Dr. Edward M. Patrick and Dr. Judith A. Dawson

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Introduction

In the 1984-85 school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), at the governor's behest, began to actively encourage Pennsylvania school districts to reform their teacher supervision/evaluation (TS/E) procedures. Its goal was to improve the quality of classroom instruction and make teacher evaluation more consistent and meaningful. As an initial step PDE, in cooperation with the state Intermediate Units, sponsored a series of 29 regional two-day workshops to familiarize school staff with the components of effective TS/E systems and the staff skills required to implement them (McGreal, 1983). In 1985-86, PDE plans to provide districts with more specific models and how-to-do-it information based on existing TS/E systems in the state. This will be followed by technical assistance in the development and implementation of similar TS/E systems.

To obtain some of the data necessary to this effort, PDE commissioned RBS to design and conduct this study of five school district TS/E systems. The five districts were selected by PDE after a questionnaire and phone survey determined which districts in the state had TS/E systems either in place or evolving. An attempt was also made to include urban, suburban, and rural sites, among the districts selected. In the end, Abington Heights, Pittsburgh, and Upper Perkiomen were selected because they had Madeline Hunter-type instructional improvement/supervisory models in use. Suburban East Penn and rural Tamaqua were selected for their evolving alternative TS/E systems.

Method

The study took a case study approach. Separate interview protocols for district central office staff, administrators/trainers and teachers were developed and pilot tested. These were based in part on the protocols used in a recent Rand Corporation study of effective teacher evaluation practices (Wise, et al., 1984, personal communication). The interviews also addressed some 25 how-to-do-it type questions posed over the past year by Pennsylvania school officials in TS/E related meetings and conversations.

In addition, the terms "supervision" and "evaluation" were defined at the beginning of each interview to ensure a common understanding among participants and researchers. Supervision was defined as that cycle of activities between a teacher and an administrator or supervisor that is intended to improve the teacher's ability to perform in the class. It is primarily improvement oriented and can focus on instructional techniques, class management, planning, implementation of the district curriculum, and so forth. It can focus on teacher improvement goals and/or district goals. Evaluation was defined as the culmination of the supervision cycle wherein the administrator or supervisor makes a summary judgment or evaluation of the teacher's classroom performance for personnel or accountability purposes--usually on an annual basis.*

A three-phase study procedure was devised. First, descriptive TS/E system background and policy information (e.g., policy manuals, training

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*In Pennsylvania, the annual evaluation of teachers and other professional employees is mandated (c.f. Pennsylvania Education code, Chapter 351, 351.21 Rating Form). The state form for this purpose, the Temporary Professional Employee/Professional Employee Rating Form, is referred to here as DEBE-333.

materials, observation instruments, budget data) was solicited from each of the five districts. A brief pre site-visit background information questionnaire was also used. Second, in the spring of 1985, two researchers spent three days on site at each district (six person days per site) interviewing school staff. At each site they interviewed central office staff and district trainers for approximately three hours, administrators for one-and-one-half hours, and teachers (separately or in small groups) for a half-hour. In the four smaller districts, Tamaqua, Upper Perkiomen, Abington Heights, and East Penn, the number of administrators (including central office staff) and teachers interviewed ranged from 7 to 10 and 31 to 43, respectively. In Pittsburgh, the largest district, 22 administrative staff and 51 teachers were interviewed either separately or in small groups. Across the five districts, a total of 20 central office staff, 37 administrators and/or trainers, and 194 teachers were interviewed.

Interviews with central office staff touched upon development processes, system designs and operations, and outcomes, strengths and weaknesses. Interviews with administrators focused primarily on their specific roles in supervision and evaluation, the utility of the training they received, their perceptions of their impact, perceived system strengths and weaknesses, and recommended changes. Interviews with teachers focused primarily on their perceptions of the utility, impact and fairness of the training/supervision and evaluation procedures, the specifics of the procedures, perceived strengths and weaknesses, and recommended changes. Several questions were asked of all staff to determine if they shared common perceptions of the goals, procedures and impact of the TS/E system.

Lastly, follow-up contacts with select district officials were made for further clarification of the information collected. In essence, district staff verified the accuracy of the program descriptions and implementation procedures cited in the report.

Related Research

Two recent publications address factors related to effective teacher supervision/evaluation systems. McGreal (1983) identified nine factors shared by effective teacher evaluation systems: (1) focus on instructional improvement as opposed to accountability; (2) correspondence between the major purpose(s) of supervision/evaluation and procedures and instrumentation; (3) separation of evaluation of teaching (supervision for improvement purposes) from teacher evaluation; (4) use of some form of goal setting procedures (individualization of supervisory procedures); (5) a narrow focus on teaching and a common understanding among administrators and teachers of the teaching act; (6) use of a modified clinical supervision format; (7) use of alternative sources of data; (8) different requirements for tenured and non-tenured teachers; and (9) in-depth training or staff development for both administrators and teachers.

The second publication was a recent Rand study (Wise, 1984) of teacher evaluation systems in 32 school districts. Four of the districts were studied intensively. Researchers found well-developed supervision and evaluation systems in only a few of the districts. The problems most frequently cited in the districts were: (1) lack of sufficient resolve and competence on the part of principals to evaluate accurately; (2) teacher resistance to and lack of support for district evaluation programs because

of apathy and perceptions of inconsistent criteria and subjective variability in the evaluation process; and (3) lack of credibility in cases where generalists (principals) evaluated specialists (high school and/or special subject area teachers). The most commonly cited benefits, even in less well-developed teacher evaluation systems, were: (1) improved administrator-teacher communications; and (2) increased teacher awareness of instructional goals and classroom practices, due in part to the use of modified clinical supervision procedures.

The characteristics which distinguished the more successful from the less successful districts were: (1) provision of top-level leadership and resources for the evaluation program; (2) provision of training for evaluators in the skills required to evaluate effectively; (3) teacher-evaluator goals and procedures; and (4) development and implementation of evaluation procedures and support systems that are integrated with the district's overall goals and organizational structure.

The Report

This report presents the detailed case study of each of the five districts. A related document contains a summary of the case studies, and a detailed discussion of the study findings and recommendations.

Study Findings

Analyses of the data generally indicate that the study results provide support for many of the characteristics of effective TS/E systems identified by the Rand study and McGreal's publication.

CASE STUDY 1

Abington Heights School District
218 East Grove Street
Clarks Summit, PA 18411

CASE STUDY 1: ABINGTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Background Data

Schools

- 4 Elementary (K-4)
- 1 Middle (5-8)
- 2 High Schools (9-10) & (11-12)

Students

- 3,364 students
- 99% white
- Student population declining

Staff

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Instructional Services
- Business Manager
- Director of Public Relations
- 3 Elementary School Principals
- 1 Middle School Principal and an Assistant Principal
- 1 High School Principal and 2 Assistant Principals
- 8 Subject Area Coordinators/Supervisors (supervisory certificated)
- 5 Department Heads (non-supervisory)
- 99 Elementary School Teachers
- 119 Secondary School Teachers (74% of staff = 10+ years of experience)

Average Per-Pupil Expenditure

- $3,381

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation

- Modified DEBE-333 procedure, instituted in 1975-1976.
- Hunter-based staff development initiative, Program for More Effective Teaching (PMET) initiated in 1979.
- Teacher evaluation indirectly referenced in collective bargaining agreement with PSEA affiliated teachers' association.

Community

The Abington Heights School District which is located about eight miles north of Scranton, Pennsylvania is comprised of eight growing boroughs and townships populated by approximately 21,000 residents. The boroughs and townships may be classified as basically middle and upper middle class professional communities. Relatively little industry exists in the district, and the one rural area in the district is diminishing in size as more land is being divided into building sites.

Program Initiation, Planning, and Start-up

Initiation

Three primary factors which occurred somewhat concurrently contributed to the initiation of the district's staff development, supervision and evaluation effort, a Program for More Effective Teaching (PMET).

- The superintendent developed an interest in 1977 and 1978 in applying the instructional improvement and supervision staff development programs of Madeline Hunter and Ernie Stachowski on hearing their presentations at national conferences. He perceived a need to improve the effectiveness and consistency of the implementation of the existing teacher supervision/evaluation (TS/E) program.

- A district teachers' association survey conducted in the latter half of the 1977-78 school year revealed that staff perceived significant inconsistencies in teacher performance expectations and related teacher evaluation procedures in the district. Differences existed among principals and teachers, and among administrators at various levels within the district.

- An attempt to rectify these inconsistencies via shared, self-staff development sessions conducted in the 1977-78 school year by district administrators for district administrators, using the Hunter films, ended in frustration due to insufficient content knowledge and training expertise (i.e., the administrative staff tried to use the Hunter films to train themselves in the principles of effective instruction with the intent of applying this knowledge to their class observations).

Planning and Start-up

At the end of the 1977-78 school year, the superintendent and board decided that a more concerted effort was needed to address the district's TS/E problems.

- They sent a committee of board members, subject area coordinators and administrators (N=8) to study the exemplary Hunter-based staff development program of the Newport News, Virginia School District in October, 1978. This program had been underway for several years.

- The committee endorsed the program and the board approved a pilot test of a similar staff development/supervision program for 1978-79.

- An elementary school principal (former classroom teacher and teachers' association president) volunteered to be the district trainer and received extensive training in the "elements of instruction" and "supervision" (Newport News, Virginia = 3-4 weeks in January 1979; and Stachowski = 1 week in 1979 at a NASE conference in Phoenix, Arizona). Bill Ethridge, staff development director, Newport News, Virginia provided continuing support to the district trainer.

- The trainer conducted a highly successful six-day pilot workshop of Hunter's principles of effective instruction for district central office staff, the elementary and middle school principals, the teacher coordinators/supervisors, and two teachers selected by the teachers' association, in the spring of 1979.

- The superintendent presented a three-year plan to the board for a Program for More Effective Teaching (PMET) in June 1979. Testimony from the pilot workshop participants and Bill Ethridge was provided in support of the program. The board approved a three-year plan, and a few years later approved funds for the fourth year.

- The teachers' association endorsed the staff development program contingent on the qualification that it not be tied to teacher evaluation. The teachers' association, apparently as the result of a difficult teacher strike a few years earlier, was mistrustful of the administration's motives in introducing the program.

- The goals of the programs were:

  -- to improve teachers' instructional skills, and develop a common vocabulary and set of expectations regarding the teaching act among teachers and administrators

  -- to improve administrators' and supervisors' instructional and supervision skills.

Program Funding

Annual Costs and Allocation of Monies

The PMET program was first included as a line item in the district budget in 1979. The approximate costs per year since the program's inception were:

1979-80	$30,000	
80-81	$20,000	PMET Staff Development
81-82	$20,000	
82-83	$20,000	
83-84	$10,000	Primarily non-PMET Staff
84-85	$10,000	Development

The PMET costs cited above (1979-1983) were basically distributed as follows:

90% = Salaries for substitute teachers to replace: (a) the district teachers undergoing five days of training, and (b) two assistant trainers (teachers used in 1979-81).

5% = Consultant costs and additional training for the trainer and district administrators.

5% = Materials and miscellaneous costs.

Source of Monies

In 1979, most teachers had reached the maximum allowable district reimbursement for graduate credits taken. Thus, the board-approved monies formerly targeted for graduate credit reimbursement were transferred to support staff development. In addition, in 1979 the district "director of personnel" position was changed, on the retirement of the incumbent director, to the "director of personnel and staff development." The new district trainer assumed the position. Thus the change in job description afforded the district a half-time staff developer or trainer without any significant expenditure of additional or new monies.

Staff Development: Content, Process and Evaluation

Administrators: Content and Process

A five-day summer training session was conducted in 1979 for district administrators and supervisors by Bill Ethridge of Newport News, Virginia, to provide administrative staff with clinical supervision skills. Ethridge was used because he had more credibility, at the time, than the district trainer who was the youngest administrator in the district. The training reviewed Hunter's elements of instruction and focused on a model clinical supervision procedure. During training, each administrator taught a practice lesson, scripted from 5-7 lessons, conducted 3-4 practice post-conference sessions and critiqued 3-4 post conferences of other administrators. In essence, administrators were taught how to gather and analyze classroom observation data, assess teaching act strengths and needs, set objectives for instructional conferences with the teacher, and plan and conduct the instructional conferences to provide reinforcement, coaching and follow-up. The supervision model adopted from the Newport News School District included the following steps: (1) inform teachers of expectations, (2) observe and record the teaching act, (3) analyze the record for strengths and needs in the teaching act, (4) prioritize the strengths and needs for the instructional conference, (5) plan the instructional conference, (6) conduct the conference, and (7) provide follow-up.

Most district administrators also received further training in the summer of 1980. They attended a 5-day training institute sponsored by Madeline Hunter at either Villanova University (Pennsylvania) or B. Wallace College (Ohio).

The second, third and fourth years of PMET training also involved administrators, about a dozen times, in the two teacher-practice/observation/post-conference sessions that concluded the PMET training of the teachers in their respective buildings. In the next-to-last session, they observed the trainer script and post-conference the teacher's lesson. In the final session, they scripted and post-conferenced the lesson and received feedback on their performance from the district trainer.

A series of in-service seminars were also conducted periodically by the district trainer for principals and supervisors during the first two years of the program to allow for more indepth discussion and understanding of the PMET instruction and supervision model.

Teachers: Content and Process

Starting in 1979-80, teachers were trained in the PMET content adopted from similar programs in California and Virginia. Skills developed through PMET included:

- how to select an objective at the correct level of difficulty
- how to teach to an objective
- how to monitor the progress of students and make adjustments if necessary
- how to use, without abusing, the principles of learning: set and closure in the lesson, covert and overt behavior in learning, motivation of learning, and reinforcement, retention and transfer of learning.

PMET was not designed to train all teachers to teach alike. Instead, it: (1) provided them with fundamental instructional skills necessary for the application of a variety of teaching styles, (2) enhanced their professional decision making skills related to teaching, and (3) established a common instructional language enabling them to label and apply systematically effective teaching techniques in order to improve instruction.

The teachers were taught in small groups (N = approximately 15). The training for each group spanned a five or six-week period and involved the following.

- Teachers were released for five full-day sessions at which the concepts of PMET were taught. Every possible effort was made through the use of illustrations, examples, questions, and activities to help teachers see the practicality of all that was advocated.
- The instructor modeled the instructional skills presented in each input session. The teachers also viewed and evaluated videotaped segments of the components of effective teaching.
- Time was provided between each input session (three or four school days) for teachers to practice the skills presented in their own classrooms. While in their classrooms, they were visited by a PMET instructor who observed a lesson and conducted an instructional conference following each of the five input sessions.

- Administrators accompanied the instructor to practice sessions four and five and were involved in the instructional conferences following these lessons. No records of these lessons were kept by either the instructor or the principal.

- Lessons taught during the practice phase of the program had no bearing on a teacher's final evaluation.

- After a teacher completed the course, the principal took over the role of observing and conferencing with the teacher to continue monitoring and reinforcing the instructional skills taught.

Evaluation of Staff Development

The district conducted a formative evaluation of the PMET staff development program, both in the initial pilot session and in succeeding training cycles for administrators and teachers. Participants were asked, via questionnaire, for their perceptions of the utility of the skills being presented, and for suggested changes in the training design and procedures. Participants' reactions to the training were generally quite favorable, although there was a fair amount of resistance at the secondary level. Most staff reported they had learned much that could be applied immediately to their teaching. The district chose not to conduct any summative evaluation of the program per se. Staff were not tested formally for their acquisition of PMET content. In addition, no attempt has been made to tie teachers' subsequent classroom performance to student achievement data. Central office staff noted that such summative evaluation procedures would have been counter-productive to the "helping or school improvement" philosophy of the program.

Staff Development Schedule/Timeline

School Year	Staff Trained in PMET	Approximate Number Trained	Training Format
(1) 1979-80	Volunteer elementary and middle school teachers*	62	Four five-week PMET training cycles (N=approximately 15 per cycle) each involving five full-day input sessions. Each session was followed by three days of practice in the classroom and a follow-up observation/coaching/ conference session with the teacher by the trainer or his assistant**
(2) 1980-81	Remainder of elementary and middle school teachers	65	Five five-week PMET training cycles similar to the above
(3) 1981-82	Volunteer and non-volunteer high school teachers	65	Four five-week PMET training cycles similar to the above
(4) 1982-83	Remainder of high school teachers, all teachers new to the district, plus special subject teachers (librarians and guidance counselors received two days of training)	70	Four five-week PMET training cycles similar to the above

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*Over the four-year staff development period, approximately 80% of the teaching staff volunteered for training. The remainder were recruited. There were only four hold-outs.

**Two middle school teachers received two weeks of training at Newport News, Virginia and assisted the trainer as instructors and follow-up coaches in three training cycles in year two of the program.

Implementation of District Supervision/Evaluation System

Philosophy/Policy

It is the district's philosophy that both teacher supervision and teacher evaluation should be perceived by all professionals as a positive approach toward the improvement of instruction and professional growth. The district employs a modified DEBE-333 procedure for teacher evaluation primarily for accountability and related personnel decisions. The PMET staff development program and the continuing follow-up supervision process are viewed as focusing primarily on teacher or school improvement. The PMET supervision and DEBE-333 evaluation processes are seen by central office staff as "being related" or "informally connected." That is, specific PMET terminology does not appear on the DEBE-333. However, PMET-based supervisory classroom observation data, along with other informal data, are used to support conclusions and ratings made in the course of the DEBE-333 annual evaluation process.

Requirements

The district requires two formal supervisory observations of tenured and four formal supervisory observations of non-tenured teachers each year. The observations may or may not be announced, usually cover a full class period, and involve anecdotal record or script taping, lesson diagnosis, a post-conference, and a formal write-up. The observations are intended to focus primarily on PMET instructional concepts but may also focus on other aspects of teaching as needed (planning, class management, interpersonal skills, etc.). Teachers sign off on the formal observation reports and may comment in writing or request an appeal, if they so desire.

The DEBE-333 evaluations are completed toward the end of the school year based on principals' informal and formal interactions with teachers and supporting data provided by the coordinators/supervisors. Copies of all formal supervisory observations and DEBE-333 evaluations are shared with the central office and kept on file in each building. The district has a due process procedure wherein, upon the receipt of an unsatisfactory rating for the year, the teacher has the right to a formal appeal procedure first to the principal, then to the superintendent and finally, if still dissatisfied, to the board of school directors. The district's agreement with the education association permits the district to freeze a teacher's salary increment for the next year if an overall unsatisfactory rating is received. Only two unsatisfactories have been given in the last five years and the district has not had occasion to counsel-out any teachers. Two unsatisfactories in a row constitute grounds for dismissal.

Organization and Process

The district's supervision and evaluation process is carried out by the school principals, assistant principals, and the eight subject area

coordinators/supervisors in the district. The superintendent and assistant superintendent manage the process and only become directly involved in observing teachers in cases where permanent substitutes are being considered for tenure-track employee status or in situations where there are serious questions about a teacher's competence. Principals and supervisors are expected to spend about 20% of their time on supervision/evaluation, while the superintendent and his assistant spend from 10% to 20%.

The three elementary school principals' teacher observation load ranges from approximately 15 to 25 teachers and specialists per year. The middle school principal and assistant have the largest load, splitting the observation of some 60 teachers and specialists per year, approximately half of whom are also observed by a coordinator/supervisor. The high school principal and his two assistants divide the observation of some 70 teachers, almost all of whom are also observed by one of the coordinators/supervisors.

System Monitoring

The superintendent and his assistant monitor the implementation of the supervisory observation/conferencing system by sitting in on one teacher observation/conference with each of the district administrators and coordinators/supervisors each year. They provide feedback and reinforcement as needed. They also review copies of the written observation reports to make sure they are focused on the elements of instruction and in compliance with the prescribed district reporting format. The system provides some latitude for individual differences in the various steps in the supervisory model. Generally speaking, central office staff are satisfied that the PMET training has brought a satisfactory measure of standardization across schools and classrooms to the district teacher supervision process. The DEBE-333 procedure is done to satisfy state requirements, and would probably be dropped if district officials had their choice.

Administrators' Perceptions

The high school principal (11-12), assistant high school principal (9-10), middle school principal, three elementary school principals and two subject area coordinators/supervisors (7-12) were interviewed for their perceptions of the district's teacher supervision/evaluation system.

Relationship Between Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

The administrators indicated that the district "attempts" to make a clear distinction between their role as supervisors and evaluators. They noted, however, that the two roles and procedures of necessity tend to run or blend together. That is, they are required to write-up the formal teacher observations (supervision) and do use these reports as data to

assist them in completing the DEBE-333 end-of-year evaluation. Most indicated they had no problem in implementing their dual role. Two staff, however, felt they might be more effective at improving instruction if the roles could be more cleanly separated and if they could find more time to conduct informal observations and conferences (i.e., no write-ups).

Utility of PMET and Clinical Supervision Training

Without qualification, all staff found the PMET and clinical supervision training to be very effective and valuable. All but one, however, expressed a need for additional training. Half expressed interest in additional training in one or more areas related to observing and conferencing teachers. Two expressed a desire for a support group to meet regularly to discuss system implementation/refinement skills and problems. Two others desired training in other content areas related to teaching (e.g., class management, higher order thinking skills, etc.).

Feasibility of Implementation

The amount of total time per year staff estimated they spent on formal teacher supervision and evaluation varied from approximately 35 hours per year to 140 hours per year. The estimated average time to complete one formal observation-report preparation-post-conference cycle also varied between staff from about one to two hours. Half of the staff interviewed reported they had problems finding and scheduling the time for the observations. All staff, however, felt more comfortable in implementing their roles as supervisors and evaluators after having experienced the staff development program. All were also able to cite specific ways in which they assisted specific teachers to improve their instructional skills (e.g., suggest different teaching techniques, interpreting class reaction, coaching on PMET concepts).

Impact of Supervision

Administrators generally perceived that PMET helped teachers improve their instruction and increased their awareness of whether true learning was occurring. They indicated that common expectations, a common language and a supervisory structure were now in place. Two felt, however, that even more inservice, follow-up coaching or training could be conducted to deal with the small percentage of teachers who are not as effective as they might be. They noted there has been little PMET inservicing and follow-up in the past two years.

Administrative staff also shared the common perception that PMET was more favorably received in the elementary school. There was both administrative and staff resistance to PMET at the secondary level. The initial reactions of the secondary staff to PMET training were negative. Although secondary staff are less negative now, and a good number have come around, problems still exist. Several felt some of the problems could have been ameliorated if the program had been introduced differently, perhaps in

a less unilateral fashion with illustrative R&D data, statistics and testimony provided to support its use. Secondary staff's mistrust of the former superintendent's motives in introducing the program (i.e., "a way to get us," "more work"), also purportedly confounded its introduction.

Impact of Evaluation

Most administrative staff questioned the extent to which the DEBE-333 end-of-year evaluation helped teachers to improve their instruction. They perceived the during-the-year observations to be more useful to that end. They did feel it: (1) served as a wrap-up and overall summary of a teacher's performance, (2) served as a source of recognition, (3) provided one-to-one contact, and (4) served as a vehicle to track a teacher's performance from year-to-year. They perceived that teachers probably had no strong views toward it one way or the other and viewed it as "so-so" or a "pro forma" procedure, except in those few cases where negative ratings were received. Most also perceived that outstanding and poor teachers would not get similar ratings under the present system, although average and good teachers might get similar ratings. Overall, they noted it had less impact than in the past because of its decreased significance for continued employment.

Perceived Strengths

Administrative staff agreed that the most important contribution of PMET was that it established a common language and common expectations among staff as to what comprises "good teaching." It also helped increase communications. Another perceived strength was that administrators felt more comfortable in evaluating lessons in subject areas in which they were not content experts.

Perceived Problems

Most administrators reported that finding the time to schedule the required observations/conferences was a problem. A few felt the program was beginning to lose some of its impact, in part due to the increased workload of administrators, which reportedly hindered their efforts to carry out the required observations/conferences "as well as they would like." A few also questioned the present level of commitment of the school board to support and follow through on the program as a district priority. Several also perceived some evidence of continued resentment and misunderstanding of the purpose of the PMET supervision process on the part of teachers and attributed this issue to the way the program was introduced.

Perceived Needs

Each of the following were perceived as needs by two or three administrators:

- to assess the district's teacher observation reports annually to determine common instructional needs and design follow-up inservice sessions for teachers to address these needs (e.g., "There's a need for follow-up inservice of teachers on PMET.")

- to continue to provide inservice to administrators to upgrade their observation and conferencing skills ("My quality needs to continue to grow." "I have trouble recommending ways to help average teachers grow." "The once a year monitoring of my conferencing skills by central office staff hasn't influenced me much.")

- to have the administrators meet periodically to share ideas and discuss common problems regarding supervision and evaluation ("We did this a little in the first few years, now we don't do it anymore.")

- to receive more administrative help with supervision and evaluation

- to concentrate more assistance on those teachers who really need help

- to explore the use of additional data gathering procedures (e.g., time-on-task, teacher expectations, etc.)

- to bring the instructional sections of the DEBE-333 more in line with the terminology used in PMET and to make the other sections of the DEBE-333 more objective or low-inference in nature.

Teachers' Perceptions

Forty-two teachers were interviewed to elicit their perceptions of the district's supervision/evaluation system. Nineteen taught at the elementary level, 12 at the middle school, and 11 at the high school.

Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

The majority of the teachers (over 80%) did not perceive a clean distinction between the purpose of teacher supervision and teacher evaluation. They saw the procedures (process and format) as different but felt they blended together and both resulted in or constituted evaluation. The frequency which teachers reported being observed and their descriptions of the procedure (i.e., announced or unannounced observations, review of planbook, anecdotal notes of lesson observation, post-conference critique of lesson based on analysis of notes--reinforcement of positives and suggestions for changes--followed by a written observation report which they sign off on) were in full agreement with the information provided by the administrators. In a half-dozen instances, the teachers reported that the final observation report was prepared prior to the post-conference. All teachers also appeared to have a clear and common understanding of the expectations for the class observations (i.e., to check on the implementation of PMET instructional concepts as well as planning, class atmosphere, student reactions, discipline, etc.). In general, the elementary teachers reported a much higher level of informal supervision (informal class drop-ins and regular conversations/interaction with the principals) than the middle or high school teachers.

All teachers were familiar with the district's modified DEBE-333 end-of-year evaluation form and reported either receiving copies of it and/or having a conference with the principal regarding their overall performance.

Satisfaction With Input

Most of the teachers perceived that they had little or no say in the design of the PMET system. This did not particularly disturb teachers at the elementary level, but did disturb several secondary teachers who reported they had mistrusted the former superintendent's intention in instituting PMET. Several teachers (nine or ten) acknowledged the teachers' association's involvement in adopting PMET but again felt that as individuals they did not have much say in its adoption (e.g., "It was the superintendent's decision."). However, the teachers were of the opinion that most staff have now accepted PMET and that much, but not all, of the resistance at the secondary level has dissipated.

Utility/Impact of PMET/Supervision

When asked about the utility of the PMET training and practice sessions they had experienced, almost all teachers commented favorably on its usefulness. Sixteen teachers gave specific examples of how it had helped their teaching and/or of how they do things differently now ("I now give a lesson rationale, objectives, and include review." "I pay more attention to lesson structure." "I focus on one skill at a time." "I use different questioning techniques." "I now check more for understanding and provide closure." "I picked up many useful tools."). Over half of the teachers also reported that it made them "more aware" of the teaching process and that they felt "more organized and structured" in their teaching. Ten teachers also indicated that the feedback they have received after class observations by principals and/or coordinators/supervisors has been helpful. A few teachers thought that it was just a review of what they had already been doing and thought it would be more useful to new teachers. Only two indicated that it was not helpful.

Teachers were also asked, "What percent of the total knowledge and skills that you currently employ in teaching would you attribute to: (1) your practice teaching experience, (2) trial-and-error learning on your own over the years and/or interaction with peers, and (3) your PMET experience?" The majority of the teachers attributed the acquisition of more than half of their total knowledge and skills to trial-and-error experiences on their own and to interaction with peers. The approximate percent of total knowledge and skills attributed to PMET was as follows: about 50% of the teachers attributed 10% of their teaching knowledge and skills to PMET, another 30% attributed 20% to 25% to PMET, a quarter of the teachers attributed 35% to 40% to PMET, and one person attributed 50% of their teaching knowledge and skills to PMET. In short, close to 60% of the teachers attributed 20% or more of their teaching expertise to their five or six week PMET staff development experience.

Utility/Impact of Evaluation

The great majority of the teachers did not view the DEBE-333 end-of-year evaluation as helping them to improve their teaching. They saw it as a pro forma exercise. A few teachers commented that it: (1) "might help new teachers," (2) "provides positive reinforcement at the end of the year," (3) "might keep people on their toes," and (4) "serves as my grade card." A few teachers also stated that they "did not even bother to look at them" or that they "had a lot of laughs over them in the teachers' room."

System Fairness

When asked whether they perceived the teacher supervision/evaluation system as fair, approximately a third said it was, a third said they were not sure and thought there might be some inconsistencies, and a third thought that it should be tightened up so there was more accountability. The latter group did not think it was fair that all teachers received the same rating. They felt the system should be modified to recognize and acknowledge the difference between above average and average teachers, and deal more directly with unsatisfactory teachers.

Strengths

At least half of the teachers perceived that the major strengths of the PMET training/supervision process were that it helped them to systematize and organize instruction, and provided a common language to facilitate discussion of teaching. At least a quarter cited one or more of the following as strengths: the program increased their awareness of effective teaching, it provided for better communication between teachers and principals, and/or it clarified the district's expectations regarding supervision and evaluation.

Needs/Problems

The most commonly identified need or problem (mentioned by about eight or nine teachers) was that the program, which they felt was forced on them, was misrepresented. That is, they felt it was a program that was proposed to help them and instead, was later used to evaluate them. Other concerns, each cited by three or four teachers, included the following. "We could use a refresher on PMET." "Two observations per year are not sufficient to evaluate us." "The observations should contain more positive reinforcement." "The principals in the middle school and high schools need to be more visible." "The supervision process should provide more help and follow-up than it currently does." "Some teachers put on a show and only use PMET when observed."

Additional perceived problems were each cited by one or two interviewees.

- "It's unfair that all the evaluations end up the same. There are some incompetent tenured teachers that the administration should confront and shape up."

- "The principals should teach a few classes to increase their credibility and keep in touch with the changing times and the changes in students."

- "The DEBE-333 and PMET observations should be more closely related and use similar terminology."

- "Principals should not announce their visits, instead they should drop in without notice."

District Administrative Staff's Overall Reflections on Program Design, Operation, and Impact

Perceived Strengths

When asked about the strengths of the district teacher supervision/evaluation system, administrative staff indicated the following.

- A common language about instruction has been developed and instructional skills have been made the focus of attention of both teachers and administrators.

- The level of trust and communication between teachers and administrators has increased to some degree.

- The PMET procedure has helped teachers by providing specific feedback and positive reinforcement related to the things they are doing well and has identified areas in which teachers need improvement.

- Administrative staff feel that they have a better handle on instruction, observation and conferencing.

- The modified DEBE-333 evaluation form, which was jointly developed and agreed on by the administration and teachers' association, is better than what was used before.

Perceived Problems

The major problems faced during the initial start-up and implementation phases of PMET were: overcoming the resistance of administrators who questioned both the intrinsic value of the program and where they could find the time for it, overcoming the resistance of teachers who saw the program as evaluation oriented and out-to-get-them, scheduling teachers in pairs related to their content areas for PMET training, and finding qualified substitutes to take over their classes during training. Administrative staff stated that part of the initial resistance was overcome just by doing it, by getting the program going. It also became part of the administrator's MBO's and that helped to decrease their resistance. It was noted that there were no particular problems initially with the board in obtaining funding due to the former superintendent's work with the board in selling the need for training.

Administrative staff perceived, however, that a problem still exists in breaking down the feeling that administrators and teachers are on different sides. They noted that administrators are still perceived by some teachers as engaging in "snoopervision" as opposed to "constructive supervision." They also felt that the district or the TS/E system was not doing as much as it should with regard to following-up on teacher observations in those cases where the observations revealed that the teachers could use some assistance. The dilemma they faced was how to do this without neglecting the observations of the bulk of the teachers whose instructional skills and general performance was perceived to be up to the district's expectations. Although they were aware of this problem, they had not devised a solution. They also perceived that the TS/E system, as a whole, was in need of renewed attention as a district priority in that the quality of implementation (observations, etc.) had lost some ground in the past few years when the district turned its attention to priorities other than PMET after the last PMET training cycle.

When asked about problems with the DEBE-333 evaluation procedure, administrative staff acknowledged that: (1) parts of it were still subjective or judgmental, and that the ratings and interpretations of the evaluation categories were subject to varied interpretations depending on who was doing the rating; (2) it does not permit them to differentiate between what is acceptable teaching and what is outstanding teaching, both types of teachers get the same "satisfactory" rating; (3) differentiated ratings of teachers on the DEBE-333 are not legally meaningful any more and it has lost its impact; (4) it does not play an important role in helping teachers to improve, it is a pro forma exercise; and (5) they would like to develop a more meaningful teacher evaluation procedure, one based in part on PMET and in part on recent effective schools and classrooms research.

Changes Made or Things They Might Do Differently

In the course of implementing PMET, district staff made the following changes or adjustments. In year one, the training for teachers was cut from six to five input days. Additional training for principals was provided, in year two of the program, by involving them in observing and conferencing the fourth and fifth teacher practice sessions. The training materials were supplemented by developing a library of five or six video tapes using district staff to model effective instructional procedures.

When asked what they would do differently if they had the opportunity to do it all over again, administrative staff indicated they would: (1) begin by implementing the program K-12 from the start and mixing staff from all levels during training; (2) provide for more involvement of the secondary teachers in the original conceptualization of PMET, to give them a sense of ownership; (3) build in more teacher observations and conferences that did not involve a write-up, because the observations are perceived as evaluation when they are written up; and (4) incorporate a much more meaningful end-of-the-year evaluation based on more relevant criteria and tied more directly or overtly to the observation reports and PMET.

Assistance They Could Have Used

Staff reported that they could have used more well-developed training materials both for teachers and administrators. They noted that appropriate training materials were not readily available then and are not available now. They mentioned using some of the Hunter films. The problem they had, however, was that the examples of instructional techniques included in the films were not appropriate for all grade levels. Based on their initial experiences with the films, they decided to do demonstration teaching of the concepts on their own and not to use the films.

Advice to Others

When asked what advice they had for other districts considering the development of similar teacher supervision programs, they offered the following suggestions and cautions.

- One of the major keys to the success of the program is the commitment of the board, central office staff and the administrators.
- Involve teachers from the beginning in the planning and conceptualization of the program.
- Do not begin training until you have in-house experience. The people who are to be the district's trainers need extensive training.
- Plan for at least a three to five-year commitment.
- Explore several different programs before you adopt one. It is important that the district commit to one instructional model, though, and in our case we chose Hunter.
- Do not expect a panacea. No one program has all the answers.
- Do not expect too much too soon. It takes time and money to develop a trainer's skills and subsequently to develop the staff's skills. Do not rush into it too quickly. Give yourself a reasonable timeline.

Summary of Findings and Discussion of Implications/Issues

Summary of Findings

The efforts of the Abington Heights School District to: (1) improve administrators' and supervisors' instructional and supervisory skills, (2) improve teachers' instructional skills, (3) develop a common language of instruction, (4) establish clear criteria and common expectations regarding instructional supervision and teacher evaluation, and (5) upgrade the

consistency of teacher supervision and evaluation, have in large part been successful. Varied levels of progress appear to have been achieved on all of the above fronts. In addition, staff generally reported increased levels of communication between administrators and teachers.

Some of the factors or strengths of the system and the procedures used to set the system in place, that appear to have contributed to that success include the following.

- The district informally explored alternative instructional models, involved the board in the process and obtained its support from the beginning, selected a single R&D-based model via a representative group process which involved most all vested groups in the decision, spent time site-visiting an exemplary implementation of the model, utilized experienced and credible consultants, conducted a pilot test of the model to test its efficacy and acquire key advocates for the model, established a three to four-year timeline for development and implementation of the system, allocated adequate resources to support the project, selected a staff member who had the trust and respect of a majority of the district's teachers to be the district's trainer, and provided the trainer with adequate training.

- Regarding staff development and system implementation, the district: provided training in the elements of the model for both administrators and teachers, provided for coaching of administrators and teachers during training, established support/seminar groups for administrators in the initial years of system implementation, kept no formal observation records on teachers' performance during training, conducted formative evaluations of training sessions, required that principals' post-training teacher observations involve anecdotal note taking/lesson analysis and post-conferences followed by a written report in a structured format, annually monitored principal's observation-conferencing behaviors and provided feedback on their performance, required a specific number of observations of each teacher each year, and periodically reviewed principals'/supervisors' observation reports for instructional focus and quality.

No system is without its problems. Some of the problems perceived by district administrative staff, teachers, and/or the researchers, which appear to have constrained or placed a ceiling on the considerable level of success achieved by the district in updating its teacher supervision/evaluation system to the end of improving instruction are best summarized as follows.

- At the time the program was conceptualized, the district, constrained by the after effects of a recent strike and concomitant pressures from the teachers' association, did not clearly conceptually relate teacher supervision for instructional improvement to the annual teacher evaluation or rating procedure. In fact, the district administration agreed to keep the two procedures separate with regard to both their operational procedures and intent. Given

the dual supervisory evaluative role of principals, the design and schedule of PMET training and evaluation implementation, and the inherent overlap of the teacher performance domains involved in teacher supervision and teacher evaluation, this appears to have been an almost impossible task. Consequently, although administrators and teachers share a common understanding of the procedures involved in supervision and evaluation they differ to a large extent in their understanding of the purpose and intent of the two procedures; with administrators professing to see a clearer distinction between the purposes of supervision and evaluation than teachers. A number of teachers felt that a trust was abused in that they perceived that the purpose of PMET was misrepresented, and that contrary to the district's initial statement, PMET was being used to evaluate teachers.

- Other factors which were perceived to have constrained the effectiveness of the program were: the secondary staff could have been more actively involved in the start-up of the program; elementary and secondary level staff were trained separately, thus maintaining traditional political units and differences between these units; the amount of time allowed for principals and teachers to practice PMET skills was perhaps not long enough to build sufficient trust; more, informal observing/conferencing, with no formal write-ups would also have contributed to greater levels of both skill and trust; the long-term needs of principals for additional training, support and follow-up monitoring/coaching were addressed by the district in a modest fashion; the district PMET trainer did not have a strong role identification with the secondary staff; follow-up work with teachers who really need help has not been perceived as intense or effective; a level of perfunctory implementation of the observation/conferencing process has crept into the system over the past few years due to time constraints and other factors; the modified DEBE-333 evaluation procedure is perceived as a pro forma exercise; and, at least a third of the staff do not feel that the teacher supervision-observation system has any teeth or accountability built into it and would like to see it modified to afford recognition of outstanding versus average teachers, and to deal firmly with ineffective teachers.

Implications/Issues

The experiences of the Abington Heights School District offer many hints, in terms of both do's and don'ts, to other districts considering the adoption of similar teacher supervision/evaluation systems. These are implicit in the findings reported above. Some of the most salient implications include:

- the importance of using a representative group process in program selection and the importance of providing quality staff training. The use of a representative process to select a supervisory instructional model (broad-based committee involvement, site visits to exemplary programs, use of consultants, pilot test to build an

advocacy group), and the provision of a quality training program for both administrators and teachers in a single model of instruction (input, modeling, guided practice, feedback and follow-up sessions), are factors which contribute to program success

- the necessity of clarifying fully, up-front, the relationship between instructional supervision/staff development and teacher evaluation. Ideally, the two should be related and after a sufficiently long training and phase-in period (one to three years may be required) the instructional model chosen by the district and the related observation/conferencing procedures should become a part of teachers' and administrators' accountability, respectively, for annual evaluation purposes

- the importance of taking sufficient time and expending sufficient resources to sell the program to all school staff to win their advocacy and support of the program

- the desirability of mixing staff from all levels (K-12) during training to create new political units in support of the program, reduce traditional program, role and turf issues/barriers, and facilitate cross-level communications

- the desirability of providing a sufficiently long program training and phase-in period for all staff before the program (new knowledge and skills) is made a "formal" part of teachers' observation and evaluation. This not only increases staff knowledge and skills, it also builds trust and confidence that the district intends to provide more than adequate practice, help, and support before staff are formally held accountable for mastering new teaching skills

- the importance of providing quality, sustained, long-term monitoring of system implementation along with similar follow-up and support for all role groups involved (principals, supervisors and teachers) to monitor and adjust the system to insure its continued effective and efficient operation.

CASE STUDY 2

East Penn School District
640 Macungie Avenue
Emmaus, PA 18049

CASE STUDY 2: EAST PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Background Data

Schools

- 9 Elementary Schools
  - 5 (K-3)
  - 2 (K-5)
  - 1 (K-6)
  - 1 (4-6)
- 2 Junior High (7-8)
- 1 High School (9-12)

Students

- 5,800 students
- 99.9% white
- Secondary student population slightly declining, elementary population growing slightly

Staff

- Superintendent
- Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- 5 Elementary School Principals
- 2 Junior High School Principals and 2 Assistant Principals
- 1 High School Principal and 2 Assistant Principals
- 5 Curriculum Supervisors (K-12) (English, Math, Science, Health and Physical Education, and Art).
- 7 Department Heads or Subject Area Leaders (non-supervisory: serve in departments where there are no supervisors)
- 1 Staff Development Person (½ time)
- 130 Elementary School Teachers
- 170 Secondary School Teachers
  (71% of staff = 10+ years of experience)

Average Per-Pupil Expenditure (Total Budget - Total Students)

- $3,500

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation

- Modified DEBE-333 procedure, instituted in 1981.
- R&D-based supervisory staff development program for principals, and ProCEED staff development program for teachers (and principals).
- Teacher evaluation has been included in the collective bargaining agreement with the PSEA affiliated teachers' association for the past 15 years.

Community

Located five miles from Allentown, Pennsylvania, the East Penn School District lies in the heart of the Lehigh Valley, a metropolitan area with a population of a half million people. Extensive business, industrial, and residential development is taking place amid expansive and flourishing agricultural lands. The 50 square mile district, which has a population of 33,600 residents is composed of five municipalities. The population, which has doubled in the past 20 years, ranges from middle to upper middle class. Housing consists of mostly single homes in suburban communities.

Program Initiation, Planning, and Start-up

Initiation

The initiation of recent efforts to improve the teacher supervision/evaluation system in East Penn can be traced back to 1980-81. The superintendent at that time established a Teacher Evaluation Committee to review the teacher evaluation process. There had been some discontent in the district over implementation and communication problems related to teacher evaluation that had developed after a 22-day teacher strike in the mid-1970s. The Teacher Evaluation Committee, composed of teachers, administrators, students, citizens, and board members, worked throughout the 1980-81 school year and developed a modified DEBE-333 evaluation procedure. The committee also put together a notebook, Tips for Teachers, which included a variety of R&D-based resource materials for teachers' use in improving instruction. This 86-page loose-leaf compendia addressed the teacher as a professional and included resources related to: organizational skills, working with both normal and exceptional children, the steps in the teaching act, questioning techniques, student motivation, discipline and evaluation, all aspects of school communications, videotaping guidelines, and the new evaluation procedure.

Planning and Start-up

Two sets of activities need to be described in this section. Following the 1980-81 Teacher Evaluation Committee work, the superintendent attempted to upgrade the quality and consistency of administrators' teacher observation/evaluation skills. In-house administrative staff, experienced in the Dick Manatt model of teacher supervision/evaluation, conducted summer seminars/training sessions on that model for the district administrators in 1981, 1982, and 1983.

Paralleling the above activities, the district established a staff development committee to plan a comprehensive multi-year staff development program to expand and upgrade teachers' instructional skills. The initiative was part of the district's 1982-83 long range planning effort. Committee staff of teachers' and administrators worked from December 1982 through May 1983. They visited and examined several other districts' staff development programs and reviewed research findings on effective teaching. They also reviewed district needs assessment data, past inservice committee reports, and teachers' evaluations of the previous year's district inservice activities. Based in part on appraisals of the above input, the committee recommended the content and format for a new program, Project ProCEED (Professionals Committed to Excellence in Education). The proposed content included the development of six instructional modules on various topics. The topics chosen did not include the Hunter model; staff decided against it.

The board approved the program and appointed two staff development co-directors in June 1983. From June 1983 to January 1984, the co-directors and various district staff (teachers and administrators) developed the program. The development sequence included: (1) formation of the ProCEED committee and recruitment of presenters; (2) committee development of six instructional modules on brain development/learning styles, teacher expectations and student achievement, Bloom's taxonomy, students with special needs, time/classroom management, and student motivation, respectively; (3) final recruitment of presenters and continued planning of the sessions; (4) recruitment of participants (teacher volunteers); and (5) pilot testing and revision.

The six Project ProCEED modules that were developed have been used since February 1984 to train school staff. ProCEED is characterized by: (1) in-house content development, (2) use of in-house presenters (administrators and teachers); (3) modeling of effective instructional techniques by presenters; (4) homework assignments for the participants to induce application of the content/skills imparted in each of the modules; and (5) released time for volunteer teachers to participate in the six full days of ProCEED training.

Work on Project ProCEED occurred in a period of district leadership transition. The former superintendent resigned in January 1983, and an acting superintendent was in place for eight months. The current superintendent took office in October 1983. The new superintendent perceived that a number of very positive activities were occurring in the district. He also decided, by June 1984, that there were a number of loose ends that needed to be addressed and/or coordinated (i.e., the consistency or reliability of the teacher supervision/observation process; the role of the district supervisors whose assignments had recently been expanded to include the elementary school; problems in communication among and between administration and teachers; lack of clarity/misconceptions in communicating the district's expectations regarding supervision of instruction to teachers; the need for more feedback to teachers; a need to review and monitor the supervision process; and, a need to clarify the relationship between Project ProCEED and teacher supervision/evaluation).

The superintendent hired a private consultant, Harvey Silver, to assist the district with some of the above problems in the summer of 1984. The start-up of the district's efforts to refine and coordinate existing teacher supervision/evaluation activities and district staff development activities commenced in the summer of 1984. Currently, the district is still engaged in this effort. The superintendent's goal is to bring all the pieces together in the 1985-86 school year. The pieces consist of additional ProCEED training for teachers in "an instructional model"; additional training for administrators; clarification of the district's expectations of teachers regarding effective teaching and concomitant observation/evaluation procedures; and, an effort to develop a common language about, and more standard procedures for, the district's supervision program.

Program Funding

Annual Costs and Allocation of Monies

The staff development costs cited below relate to the district's efforts to upgrade teachers' instructional capabilities via Project ProCEED (1983-present) and administrative staffs' supervisory skills as of 1984.

Project ProCEED		
Summer 1983	$ 2,500	Salaries/supplies for program development
School year 1983-84	$ 4,800	Salaries for substitutes for teachers taken out of class for training
	$ 9,000	Staff developer (½ time)
Summer 1984	$ 1,500	Summer planning
School year 1984-85	$14,000	Substitute salaries (see above)
	$ 1,200	Supplies
	$13,000	Staff developer (½ time)
Administrator Training		
School year 1984-85	$ 5,400	Consultant fees

Source of Monies

Staff development efforts in East Penn have been funded by both district and state monies. In the 1984-85 school year, for example, $8,000 of the $10,000 state grant for instructional improvement was applied to fund Project ProCEED. The remaining monies for staff development since 1983 have come from regular district funds. The superintendent noted that with a total district budget of $20 million ($12 million = salaries), monies can certainly be found for staff development. The monies can come from cutbacks/savings on different projects (e.g., cutting back a little on a driveway paving program). It can also come from monies budgeted/projected but not spent due to retirements, sabbaticals, maternity leaves, etc. Unspent monies allocated for staff tuition reimbursements might also be applied to staff development. In essence, a district can find money for staff development if it wants to.

Staff Development: Content, Process and Evaluation

Administrators: Content and Process

District administrators were exposed to four half days of training in the Dick Manatt model of teacher supervision/evaluation in the summer of 1981. Training consisted of practice in Manatt's chronological lesson progression/description technique, analysis of videotaped lesson segments, comparison/discussion of the ratings of the videotaped lessons, practice in interviewing/conferencing techniques, and discussion of the use of the district's new teacher observation form. Administrators received further practice and/or review of the Manatt techniques in three half-day training sessions in the summers of 1982 and 1983. In the course of the above training, the administrators were also exposed to several models of teaching (e.g., Berliner's prescriptions on lesson organization, DeCecco's components of a problem solving lesson, Hunter's steps in the teaching act, and research on effective teaching). However, the district did not adopt one model of teaching or train staff in-depth in any given model.

In the summer of 1984, the district brought in a consultant, Harvey Silver, for five days to work with the administrative staff on a number of issues related to TS/E. The consultant put the administrators through several exercises to assist them in understanding their administrative styles and learning styles, and the implications of such for their teacher observing/conferring. The consultant also modeled a variety of instructional techniques and strategies (concept formation, problem solving, advance organizers, and different types of thinking) related to increasing the effectiveness of lesson design and instruction. Part of the consultant's modeling was based on Madeline Hunter's model of effective teaching.

Following the summer session the consultant spent five days in the district, spread over the 1984-85 school year, meeting with small groups of staff. The intent was to follow-up on staffs' application of the content presented in the summer; engage in individual problem solving in specific areas of uncertainty; and develop action plans to addresss those uncertainties. Overall, the superintendent felt that the district's interaction with the consultant met with moderate success.

Teachers: Content and Process

Since 1981, staff development for the teachers has consisted of their exposure to Tips for Teachers, produced by the district-wide Teacher Evaluation Committee in that year. The district has also covered various instruction related topics each year, in the annual two days allocated for teacher inservice. The district's primary staff development thrust to improve the quality of instruction, however, has been Project ProCEED. Project ProCEED training began in the second half of the 1983-84 school year.

Teachers have been trained in ProCEED in small groups, 20-23 K-12 staff per group. Each group has also included a few administrators. The first group received training in the second half of the 1983-84 school year. Three groups were trained in the 1984-85 school year. Three groups each year are also scheduled for 1985-86 and 1986-87. The program will continue with the expectation that most or all of the staff will eventually have participated. Group 1 was trained over a six-week period with one day of training per week. With groups 2-4, two weeks were scheduled between each day of training to afford participants more time to complete related homework assignments. Sessions may be scheduled every third week for groups 5-10 to allow even more time for assignment completion and content practice.

To date, approximately 65-70 teachers and some 15 administrators have been trained in the 6 ProCEED modules. The training, which has the full cooperation and endorsement of the union, has been quite well received. Follow-up meetings and group reunions have also been scheduled to provide support for staff who have been through the program. Opportunities have been provided and are planned to bring people back together by groups, topics and/or departments to discuss/extend their ProCEED training. Overall, the district sees ProCEED as the beginning of its staff development effort for teachers and anticipates that its content will be modified/expanded as needed.

Evaluation of Staff Development

Evaluation of the administrators' staff development experiences (Manatt and work with the consultant) has primarily been conducted through informal small group debriefings (likes, dislikes, etc.) following training. The district has employed post-training questionnaires to assess teachers' reactions (what they liked, would change and what they would like next) to the ProCEED training. As was noted above, participants' reactions to the ProCEED training and follow-up have been extremely favorable.

Staff Development Schedule/Timeline

School Year	Staff Trained	Approximate Number Trained	Training Format
Summer 1981, '82, '83	District administrators and supervisors trained in Dick Manatt supervision/evaluation procedure	15-20	Trained by own staff experienced with the Manatt process (3-4 one-half day sessions each summer)
Summer 1984	District administrators and supervisors trained in management style, learning style and Hunter-related instructional techniques	15-20	Trained by consultant (5 full days)
1983-84	Began training school staff in 6 project ProCEED instructional modules (Group 1)	15-16 Teachers (K-12) & 3-4 Administrators	Six full days of training by district trainers (1 day per week over 6 weeks)
1984-85	Project ProCEED training of teachers and administrators continued (Groups 2, 3 & 4)	48-50 Teachers (K-12) & 9-12 Administrators	Six full days of training by district trainers (1 day approximately every 2 weeks)
1985-86 1986-87 and beyond	Project ProCEED training scheduled to continue (3 groups per year)	Remainder of school staff K-12	(See above) (1 day approximately every 3 weeks)

Implementation of District Supervision/Evaluation System

Philosophy/Policy

It is the district's philosophy/policy that teacher supervision and evaluation are a continuous and ongoing process. Supervision is perceived as--"the process of a helping relationship in action. A trained observer, knowledgeable about the elements of the teaching act and the process of classroom performance, observes and coaches the teacher about ways and means of self-improvement. Evaluation is the summative conclusion or staff rating reached after a series of lesson observations." The district generally sees teacher supervision/evaluation as being related or running together. Staff needing help, need to be identified in the supervision process. The district plans to connect the elements/content of supervision and evaluation in a more systematic manner over the next few years.

Requirements

The district's requirements for supervision and evaluation are presented best in the descriptions of the district's observation and rating procedures included in the Tips for Teachers (1981) district publication. These are cited as follows.

> Observation. All tenured teachers shall be observed at least twice per year, once in each semester. All non-tenured teachers shall be observed at least four times per year, twice in each semester. Teachers new to the district shall also be observed at least four times per year, twice in each semester, for the first full year of employment. Full-time substitutes will be observed, although they are not rated. Observations shall be made by the following personnel: (1) On the secondary level, at least one observation per year shall be done by the appropriate coordinator. At least one observation per year shall be done by the principal; and (2) On the elementary level, the principal/assistant principal shall complete the required observations. At least one observation per year shall be done by the principal. The appropriate curriculum coordinator may be called in for additional observations at the request of the principal.
>
> At least one observation per year will have a scheduled pre-observation conference. The purpose is to assist the teacher and observer in defining the important elements of the lesson, and to allow the observer to focus on those elements during the lesson. The focus on particular elements, however, does not exclude other observations concerning general teaching practices. Each observation shall last for at least one complete lesson. Secondary observations shall last one period. Post-observation conferences shall be conducted as soon as possible following every formal observation. The post-observation conference should be held between the teacher and observer no later than three working days after the observation.

The written observation report shall be received by the teacher at the conference or not later than five working days after the observation. A copy will be given to the teacher, a copy kept by the principal, a copy sent to the superintendent for the employee's personnel file, and a copy to the appropriate curriculum coordinator if applicable. An employee always has the right to respond in writing to any observation within five working days after receipt of the written observation report. The response shall be attached to all copies of the observation form.

Rating/Evaluation. All tenured teachers shall be rated at least once per year. All non-tenured teachers shall be rated at least twice a year, once in each semester. Full-time substitutes are not rated. The rating shall be completed by the principal, as the designee of the superintendent. The rating shall be completed on the East Penn School District alternative rating form, approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The rating form must be completed within five working days of the last observation. The conference between the principal and the teacher must also be held within five working days of the last observation. The teacher will at that time be asked to sign his/her rating form. If the employee refuses to sign in the space provided, such refusal shall be recorded and dated. The employee will be notified in writing of this notation within ten calendar days.

Final ratings shall be based on formal observations and the rater's judgment of the employee's total performance during the contracted teacher day. All teachers are encouraged to maintain a file which will aid the teacher and rater in arriving at a fair evaluation. The descriptors on the rating form are intended to describe a good teacher in the East Penn School District, to describe the reasonable expectation that any teacher will usually exhibit these characteristics. Each descriptor will be checked as Satisfactory, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory or Not Applicable. Checks of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory require supporting statements. Each of the four categories will be summarized as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory only. The overall rating for the period shall be Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. It is possible that a gross deficiency in a single category might be sufficiently serious to warrant a total rating of Unsatisfactory.

An overall Unsatisfactory rating means that a teacher has been informed of unsatisfactory performance in one or more categories of professional performance. A rating of Unsatisfactory is applied when the teacher's performance almost never exhibits the established criteria. This requires documentation. The rater will also provide written recommendations for improvement and correction of any deficiencies. Two consecutive Unsatisfactory ratings of a professional employee

shall be necessary to dismiss on the grounds of incompetency. The superintendent shall sign all ratings. Unsatisfactory ratings shall be signed within five working days of the last observation. (pp. 57-59)

An interesting feature of the district's observation process is the requirement that at least one observation per year involve a preconference with the teacher. The district has established guidelines for the pre-observation conference. The one page guidelines form directs the observer (principal/supervisor) to: (1) discuss where the teacher is in the course (unit, lesson, page, etc.); (2) inquire as to the objectives of the lesson observed; (3) determine what teaching/learning activities the teacher plans to use; (4) inquire upon what aspects of the lesson the teacher would like the observer to monitor (the following ideas are examples: statement of objectives, attention to review, task-orientation of lesson, clear transition signals, verbal or non-verbal emphasis, clarity of instructions, student comprehension, evidence of teacher preparation, and attention to summarization); (5) determine how the teacher plans to evaluate the achievement of the objectives; and (6) ask if there are any group or individual characteristics or circumstances of which the evaluator should be aware (unusual behavior, group interactions, students leaving class during the period, lab work).

Organization and Process

The district's teacher supervision evaluation process is carried out by the school principals, assistant principals and curriculum supervisors. On the average, elementary school principals and their assistants each supervise/observe 30 teachers, secondary principals--40 teachers, and curriculum supervisors--30 to 40 teachers. Principals and their assistants are expected to spend approximately 30% of their time on supervision/observation and related instructional activities, while supervisors are expected to spend 30-35% of their time on the same. There is an attempt at the secondary level to assign administrative staff, for observation purposes, to departments or areas in which they have some content expertise or background. The superintendent also does some teacher observations (5 this past year) as does the director of curriculum and instruction (17 this past year).

The observations of teachers focus on the various elements of instruction, organizational patterns in the class, teacher planning and questioning techniques. Observers look for effective lesson introduction, development, and closure. Writeups of observations include brief lesson descriptions, commendations, recommendations for improvements, and a summary. Both announced and unannounced observations are made. As noted earlier, one observation per year involves a structured pre-conference and all observations involve post-conferences. Several of the administrators have shared with their staff, lists of the elements of effective lesson design to give teachers an idea of what they will be looking for when they observe. There is some variability among the lists, as different administrators have pulled together or synthesized different aspects of the content of the

training they have received related to instruction. The lists vary in content, number of items, and format. In most cases, however, the teachers have not yet received formal training in the content/skills addressed in these lists.

System Monitoring

The superintendent monitors the implementation of the supervision/evaluation system primarily by reviewing all the formal observations and evaluations, submitted by his staff, for consistency and accuracy. The superintendent also interacts formally with his staff three times per year (August/September, mid-year, and May) to set beginning-of-the-year administrative goals, check on progress, and engage in end-of-the-year self-evaluation, respectively. Supervision/evaluation is part of the staffs' MBOs, and 30% of their evaluation relates to their supervisory/evaluation duties.

Administrators' Perceptions

Two assistant high school principals, an assistant junior high school principal, two elementary school principals and one assistant principal, and two curriculum supervisors (K-12) were interviewed for their perceptions of the district's teacher supervision/evaluation system.

Relationship Between Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

All administrators reported that the district was trying to make a distinction between teacher supervision and teacher evaluation. Only one saw it as a very clear distinction. Most saw the procedures as related. Most also reported that the purpose of the supervisory observations was to help teachers improve. One administrator took exception with the word "improve" and said supervision was more of a monitoring process of what was going on, and that part of the function was to "highlight what is going well." Another stated that, "In theory, the purpose of supervision is to help teachers improve, while evaluation is to rate them--however, this is not always the case in district practice."

Utility of Staff Development

Overall, the administrators spoke positively of the training (Manatt, Harvey Silver, ProCEED) that they had received. They liked the analysis of the Manatt videotapes and various aspects of the consultant's training (e.g., the emphasis on active student participation and ways to promote it, the questioning techniques, the one-on-one interviewing techniques, the hands-on experience and role playing, and the "modeling of what good instruction is"). Most indicated they had modified their behavior due to the training. One said this was the first district he had ever been in where he was trained. Almost all indicated that they were receptive to more training. Two indicated that they "would like more training in some of the things

Silver didn't get to; skills in conferencing teachers." One said, "I'd like someone to teach me how to assist a teacher who is fearful of change (the TS/E process)...how to reach out to those people." One also indicated there was some concern and/or resistance among staff regarding the Silver training.

Feasibility of Implementation

Most administrative staff indicated that they spend a fair amount of their time on supervision and evaluation. The estimated percent of time spent varied. The figures cited by the eight administratative staff interviewed were: 10, 15, 20, 30, 30, 33, 35, and 50 percent of their time, respectively. They all indicated that the clinical observation involving the pre-conference (30-45 minutes) took more time overall (two to two-and-one-half hours). Most indicated that they have shared some of their training materials (handouts on effective teaching steps) with staff. Several felt that different observers may be emphasizing different things (teaching components) to varying degrees. Several also indicated that some principals had modified the district's pre-conference guidelines. The supervisors indicated they had 55-60 staff to supervise; elementary principals had 20-40 staff; and secondary administrators had some 60 staff to supervise.

All staff indicated ways in which they worked with teachers; providing suggestions, resources, and in a few cases doing some model teaching. Several emphasized that they tried to give teachers positive reinforcement. A variety of data collection modes were reported. Some staff tried to take verbatim notes during observations. Others noted comments at various time intervals. One took brief notes on cards.

Impact of Supervision

Staff shared mixed perceptions of the impact of supervision. About a half thought it definitely had an impact and helped teachers improve. The remainder expressed some uncertainty of how effective it was with veteran teachers ("It really depends on the teacher's attitude. Some are closed out."). Several felt they had more success with newer teachers whom they generally reported spending more time with. The curriculum supervisors also related some problems in interacting with elementary staff ("They didn't know us and were unsure of what to expect."). One administrator was not sure if the system really helped staff improve. He felt it needed to be linked in a meaningful way to the staff development program for teachers.

Administrators also varied in their perceptions of how teachers have reacted to the district's supervision system. Two or three administrators perceived that teachers would like more closure on the district's expectations ("They are not really sure what we are looking for given our new training."; "I think teachers would like more follow-up to get the big picture."). Most seemed to feel, however, that there was increased acceptance by teachers of the teacher supervision/evaluation system. One, however, felt that experienced teachers perceived the system and related procedures as a form of harassment.

Impact of Evaluation

Most administrators felt that the district had made some strides in improving the evaluation procedure. They felt it had helped them to get to know teachers better. They perceived that staff saw evaluation as a "necessary process." No strong comments were made, per se, about the degree to which it helped teachers improve. A few principals, however, reported that more work might be done with marginal teachers--more follow-up. All noted that there was adequate room for written commendations both on the supervision and the evaluation forms. At least two also commented that they would like to see the formal rating scale expanded on the positive side to include a category, other than "satisfactory," for above average teachers.

Perceived Strengths

The most commonly perceived strength, mentioned by half of the administrators, was that in comparison to past procedures, some standardization had been introduced into the teacher supervision/observation process. Two staff also felt that teachers had a more positive attitude toward the program. Other strengths, each cited by a different administrator, are listed as follows.

- "Just the right amount of formal observation has been established. If we want to go beyond it, we can. In addition, evaluation is now done personally (face-to-face) and not by a letter."
- "The system provides teachers with positive feedback and suggestions."
- "Administrators are more sensitive to teachers and the complexity of teaching."
- "The process is in writing--teachers know what to expect."
- "Each teacher is observed by more than one person. Each teacher also gets a walk-in and a scheduled clinical observation."

Perceived Problems

Half of the administrators reported that finding time to conduct the observations and conferences was a problem. Two staff also mentioned that they had difficulties in providing constructive criticism/recommendations to teachers ("They see it as negative."). Other problems, each mentioned by at least one administrator, included the following.

- "Teachers are not sure what we are looking for given our new training."
- "Scheduling post-conferences is a problem."
- "The pre-conference form is not being implemented consistently. Some administrators have adapted it."

- "Some teachers still view the process as a 'gotcha game.'"
- "Working with short-time teachers is a problem. They think they are beyond any need for improvement."
- "The criteria for giving 'Needs Improvement' evaluation ratings are unclear."
- "The required observations have cut down on the time building principals have for casual, informal drop-ins to teachers' classrooms."
- "It's difficult to play both a helping role and an evaluative role. I'd rather not be the heavy but I'm in management."

Perceived Needs

Two administrators mentioned that there was a need to provide inservice to teachers in the "steps in the teaching act" ("Teacher inservice needs to be coordinated with teacher supervision/evaluation."). Two also mentioned that there was a need for more time to work with teachers by following up on the observations. In addition, each of the following recommendations were made by at least one administrator.

- "Change the evaluation rating system to include a category beyond satisfactory, to afford recognition to superior teachers."
- "Increase the time between observations and required feedback (post-conferences) to 10 days, to facilitate scheduling."
- "Provide administrators time to work with outstanding teachers so administrators can learn from them."
- "Get more scientific and systematic about the teacher supervision/evaluation system."
- "Spend more time helping teachers who need to improve their performance."

Teachers' Perceptions

Forty-three teachers were interviewed to obtain their perceptions of the district's teacher supervision/evaluation system. Nineteen taught at the elementary level, 9 at the junior high level, and 15 at the high school level.

Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

Most teachers saw supervision and evaluation as being related ("Whenever they observe us they are evaluating us."). Most staff expressed the view that the current observation/evaluation process was a definite improvement over the evaluation procedures used several years ago ("The mechanics of it are more structured." "It's nice to be commended." "The conferencing is a good feature." "They're attempting to be more consistent." "They are trying

to help us grow."). Regarding the implementation of the system, the teachers generally reported experiencing the same process (drop-in and clinical observations) as described by the administrators.

Staff had a less clear understanding, however, of the training administrators were receiving; and of how the district planned to relate Project ProCEED to teach observation/evaluation. There was concern as to how it would all fit together. Three or four staff indicated they would have liked more in-depth training or exposure to the new lesson format terms that the administrators were using. They also expressed uncertainty over whether the suggestions administrators were making regarding these terms were "just suggestions" or whether they were "the district's policy for observation criteria."

Satisfaction With Input

Most staff who experienced Project ProCEED training reported their satisfaction with the training and their pleasure and pride over the fact that such a quality program had been developed and presented by district staff. Staff were less certain about the content and purpose of the the training administrative staff had been receiving related to teacher supervision/evaluation.

Utility/Impact of Supervision/Evaluation and Project ProCEED

There were mixed perceptions of the utility of the recommendations made as a result of the observations, especially among the more experienced staff. The great majority of the staff saw them as pro forma in nature. A lesser number of staff reported that the recommendations had some utility to them--and attributed the positivity of the experience to their "particular" principal's skills, attitude, and personality. Those teachers relatively new to the district who had been through ProCEED, generally spoke more positively about the utility of the observation process. The newer teachers also spoke highly of the utility of the district's induction process. There also appeared to be about equal preference expressed for "drop-in" versus "clinical" observations. Reading between the lines, those staff who appeared to take the process more seriously, expressed a stronger preference for clinical observations (more opportunity for communication, clarification, etc.).

Twenty-two teacher's who had experienced Project ProCEED were also asked, "What percent of the total knowledge and skills that you currently employ in teaching (independent of content knowledge) would you attribute to: (1) your practice teaching experience; (2) trial-and-error learning on your own over the years and/or interaction with peers; and (3) your Project ProCEED/Supervision experiences?" The majority of the teachers attributed more than half of their teaching knowledge/skills to their own trial-and-error experiences and to their interaction with peers. The teachers attributed the following percents of their teaching knowledge and skills to their district ProCEED/supervision experiences: 45% attributed 20% to 25% of their skills to the district's recent program; 18% attributed 10% to 15% to the program; 14% attributed between 5% and 10% to the program; and 23% attributed relatively little of their knowledge and skills to the program (0% to 2%).

Consistent with the findings reported above, most all staff who had participated in Project ProCEED spoke positively of the experience. Several

indicated that they had changed one or more of their teaching behaviors (e.g., questioning, wait-time, TESA, statement of objectives, etc.) because of it. Many thought it reinforced things they already did, was useful as a review, and made them more aware of what they were doing in the classroom. Many are looking forward to more staff development and would even support it being tied to class observations, if they were non-threatening, long-term and developmental.

Utility/Impact of Evaluation

To a large extent, staff were indifferent to the end-of-year staff rating. They viewed it neither positively nor negatively, it is just there. It was a pro forma exercise. Most felt it played little or no role in helping them improve their performance. Several noted, however, that it would definitely attract their attention if they received a "Needs Improvement" or "Unsatisfactory" rating.

System Fairness

Staff expressed mixed reactions, some in favor and some not, to the idea of putting more teeth into the staff rating form. Some would like a wider range of categories to recognize outstanding service; and identify teachers who are not carrying their load. Those expressing opposition based it, in part, on whether or not administrators had the skills to make these decisions, and on the criteria to be used. Several felt that both good teaches and marginal teachers receive the same "Satisfactory" rating. Several also felt that more narrative praise could be used on the staff rating form ("We write comments on our report cards; why can't administrators do the same with us?")

Strengths

Staff appeared to share a common and positive perception that the district was moving to create a program to support the professional development of teachers. Perhaps a third of the staff expressed a desire to be treated as professionals, and saw Project ProCEED as a step in that direction. They want more humanism in the system and appreciate the two-way communication afforded by the clinical process. They saw the clinical process as being more compatible with the goals of ProCEED than the drop-in process. They also perceived some potential professional benefit in videotaping and peer observation, if dealt with in a totally non-threatening context by the administration.

Needs/Problems

There were perceptions by at least a third to one-half of the staff that there was variability among and between schools (administrators and supervisors), and years with regard to the focus and rationale of the observations. Staff made the following comments.

- "Last year they focused on 'A', this year 'B', and next year who knows what it will be."
- "Also, some principals are using ProCEED terminology with teachers who have not had the program."

- "This year their expectations are clearer than in the past."
- "Administrator A is more negative than administrator B."
- "They have to make some recommendations for improvements even if they are trivial and at times even conflicting."
- "Curriculum supervisors tend to be more critical than principals."

In actuality, most teachers did not have an accurate perception of the application and/or results of teacher evaluation across the district. It appeared to be due to a communication problem or issue.

A few staff also noted that the district's policy regarding the interpretation of the "Needed Improvement" (NI) category of the Professional Staff Rating Form needed clarification. They perceived that there was uncertainty among administrators regarding when to use the NI category, and that there were inconsistencies in the criteria used to arrive at NI ratings. They added that the administration had stated that a NI rating was not pejorative, per se. They felt, however, that most teachers viewed NI ratings quite negatively. In addition, when asked to cite the most important criteria on which they were evaluated, staff gave a variety of responses. Although all responses were relevant (e.g., preparation, lesson flow, discipline, etc.), it was apparent that staff did not share common expectations and a common language regarding the observation/evaluation process.

Finally, a few changes were suggested regarding the observation process.

- "I'd like to receive the written observation report before the meeting."
- "Have more frequent informal observations with no official write-up."
- "To be informed of results during non-class time."
- "Observe earlier in the year."
- "Need to recognize strengths more than they do."

Five or six staff also indicated they would like to see administrators and supervisors teach some lessons occasionally. Particular reference was made regarding supervisors who apparently have turned down some teachers' requests to put on a demonstration lesson to "show-me-how." It was stated that compliance with the above suggestion would aid communications, enhance credibility, and make staff more receptive to evaluators' comments and recommendations.

District Administrative Staff's Overall Reflections on Program Design, Operation, and Impact

Perceived Strengths

When asked about the strengths of the program, the superintendent and the director of curriculum and instruction cited the following:

- "The teacher supervision/evaluation system has helped a number of teachers to improve."
- "The staff development program has increased principals' and supervisors' knowledge of the components involved in quality instruction. Administrators have moved from understanding to application of this knowledge in their teacher observations and in-depth conferences."
- "Teachers are aware that the district's number one priority is to improve instruction through a 'helping process' as opposed to a 'gotcha mentality.'"
- "Project ProCEED has helped us the most. It has been well received and has built knowledge and trust. It is an investment in people as professionals."

Perceived Problems

The major problems reported by central office staff were: supervision/observation procedures were not sufficiently standardized across schools; there had been a few administrators who had showed favoritism or bias in their supervisory duties; the category descriptions on the DEBE-333 were ambiguous and not fully understood; the role of the supervisors was not fully defined at the elementary level; there was a failure on the district's part to communicate fully and clearly their expectations regarding teaching to the teaching staff; overcoming the resistance of some administrators about going into the classroom to do in-depth observations/conferences; teacher's concerns that, if they volunteered for ProCEED training, they might be held accountable via the observation-process for demonstrating all the ProCEED skills covered. In fact, central office staff said, "We did tell teachers that if they went through ProCEED training, they would be held accountable (for demonstrating new skills) through the clinical process--however, we have not clarified how and when."

Changes Made or Things They Might Do Differently

There are a number of changes that central office staff anticipate making in the various components of the teacher supervision/evaluation program. They plan to: (1) schedule three weeks between each Project ProCEED input session in 1985-86 to afford more time for teacher application and feedback; (2) synthesize/integrate and coordinate all the elements of the district's program (administrator's staff development, the consultant's input, Tips for

Teachers, Project ProCEED); (3) clarify the district's expectations regarding teaching, supervisory observations, and how these relate to the various programs; (4) clearly communicate these expectations to teachers-- make them official; (5) provide time for dialogue with staff to build understanding and trust; (6) increase the standardization of administrators' supervision/evaluation activities; (7) spend more time working with teachers most in need of assistance; and (8) provide for some coaching for administrators to increase further their skills in observing and conferring.

When asked what they would do differently if they had the chance to do it all over again, central office staff indicated they would: (1) establish the elements of a teaching model or effective lesson up front, so staff would have a common understanding and common expectations; (2) address the elements of effective teaching in the context of a single model in Project ProCEED; and (3) work with the consultant more closely over a longer period of time and come to closure on specific goals. They perceived that they were, in some ways, reactive to the consultant. The second time around, they plan to have clearer expectations and goals regarding the outcomes they expect from working with the consultant. They plan to direct and shape his input to achieve their vision of their goals.

Assistance They Could Have Used

Administrative staff reported that they could have used some assistance in tutoring or coaching principals and supervisors in their clinical roles--to work toward both greater skills in observing/conferring and increased consistency. They perceived that there was little difference between the clinical and the drop-in teacher observation write-ups or reports.

Advice to Others

When asked what advice they had for other districts considering the development of similar teacher supervision programs, they stressed the following.

- Work with the union to build trust. Develop an improvement oriented program designed to help all staff.
- Train staff K-12 in small groups (20-25). Involve administrative and teaching staff as co-presenters to build collegiality and trust.
- Give staff time to practice the skills in which they are being trained.
- Do not underestimate the importance of communications. Make sure all staff get the message.
- Involve all staff in program development/implementation decisions. Work toward staff commitment to the process. There is a difference between compliance and commitment. Commitment is the desired end.
- Have a clear vision or picture of what the program will look like at the end.

Summary of Findings and Discussion of Implications/Issues

Summary of Findings

The East Penn School District is moving forward on a number of fronts to improve the quality of teacher supervision and evaluation, and the overall quality of instruction being delivered by district teachers. The district has made definite strides in its efforts to improve administrators' capabilities in the areas of knowledge of effective instruction, teacher observation, and post-conferencing procedures. The district has attempted to introduce a measure of standardization in the above procedures. The district has also instituted a staff development program to upgrade teachers' skills in six areas related to effective teaching.

Some of the strengths of the system that appear to have contributed to the success achieved to date include the following.

- Summer training for administrators in the Dick Manatt model of supervision.
- Training for administrators in several models of effective instruction.
- The adoption of a modified DEBE-333 supervision/evaluation model which involves at least one clinical teacher observation per year (pre-conference, observation, and post-conference).
- The development of a quality R&D-based training program for teachers (6 days) which is conducted by qualified in-house staff (teachers and administrators).

Some of the problems experienced by the district which, to some extent, have placed a ceiling on the level of success achieved to date appear to be attributable to the following.

- The district did not adopted a "single" model of instruction (in toto or eclectic) as the official district model, per se. Consequently, although administrators and supervisors have attempted to implement given supervision/evaluation procedures, they have tended to focus on different models and aspects of instruction in the context of the district's system.
- The district's training of administrators has not progressed as far as might be necessary/desirable with regard to follow-up on-site coaching of administrators as they engage in implementation of the process.
- The district has not yet tied together conceptually the various ongoing staff development programs with regard to their relation to teacher supervision/evaluation. This has resulted in mixed signals being received by staff regarding district expectations and district policy.

- Because of changes in leadership and due to the variety of different topics in which administrators received training over the past five years, the district's vision of exactly where it wanted to go unfolded in a somewhat piecemeal fashion.

A number of required elements are now in place. A few more need to be addressed. District central office staff are fully aware of the above and are planning to take action to coordinate their efforts both conceptually and procedurally to achieve greater levels of program integration and increased levels of staff competence, satisfaction, and commitment.

Implications/Issues

The experiences of the East Penn School District are noteworthy from a number of perspectives that other districts might find profitable.

- First, they attest to the fact that districts can mount focused staff development programs for teachers, using their own staff, if adequate resources are allocated for planning, development, and delivery over a reasonable period of time.

- Second, the district's experiences attest to the desirability of having a clear vision of where a district wants to go with a given instructional improvement supervision program. East Penn's experiences highlight the desirability or, in fact, the necessity of defining how various programs relate to one another--clear district expectations of teachers and administrators need to be established if a supervision/evaluation program is to be successful.

- Third, the district's experiences might also be interpreted as supporting the conclusion that success in changing school staffs' skills is best achieved if training in content and skills (for administrators or teachers) is divided into discrete segments with time and resources afforded for practice, coaching, and feedback on given skills in a serial or incremental order. If a district places too much content or too many skills before staff and spends only a moderate amount of time on each, or fails to define how they interrelate, significant change may not occur--in fact, noise and mixed signals may be introduced into the system.

- Finally, the data support the conclusion that teachers need to be trained, and given feedback on their performance over time, on "a model" of instruction. If administrators are trained and teachers are not, problems will ensue.

CASE STUDY 3

Pittsburgh Public Schools
341 South Bellefield Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

CASE STUDY 3: PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Background Data

Schools

- 53 Elementary (K-5)
- 17 Middle (6-8)
- 15 High Schools
- 3 Special Education Centers

Students

- 40,257 students
- 52% black
- 47% white
- 1% hispanic

Staff

- Superintendent
- 6 Assistant Superintendents (also serve as department heads)
- 91 Principals
- 65 Assistant Principals
- 64 Supervisors
- 26 Division Heads
- 977 Elementary School Teachers
- 2,089 Middle, Secondary and Special School Teachers
- 7.7% of staff (N=237) laid-off in the last three years (79% of staff = 9+ years of experience)

Average Per-Pupil Expenditure

- (N/A)

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation

- Modified DEBE-333 procedure, instituted in 1985-86.
- Hunter-based staff development initiative, Pittsburgh Research-based Instructional Supervisory Model (PRISM) initiated in 1981; currently comprised of four programmatic efforts: PRISM I, II, III and IV.
- Teacher evaluation has been included in the collective bargaining agreement with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers since 1967.

Community

The City of Pittsburgh School District, located in Allegheny County, serves some 425,000 residents. As a large urban area, the district serves a heterogeneous mix of students. Family backgrounds represent a mix of all professions and vocations from highly educated professionals to unskilled laborers and unemployed. The total population of the city decreased by 96,000 persons or 18.5% during the ten-year period 1970-1980. The school age population decreased by 39%, or 45,000 students, during that same ten-year period. At present, the area is slowly recovering from the economic privations brought about by the decline of the area's steel industry.

Program Initiation, Planning, and Start-up

Initiation

The Pittsburgh Research-based Instructional Supervisory Model (PRISM), and other Pittsburgh Public School educational improvement initiatives, were initiated as a result of the leadership of the superintendent who assumed office in September 1980. In a review paper, A Superintendent of Education: Opportunity for Excellence (Wallace, 1985),* the superintendent outlined his views of the instructional leadership role of the superintendent, as it relates to improving public education in today's schools, and chronicled the activities he initiated in Pittsburgh to improve education. These activities can be described as follows.

- A district-wide needs assessment, conducted by Dr. William Cooley and his staff at the Learning Research and Development Center (October 1980-January 1981) at the request of the superintendent, led to the school board's January 1981 adoption of school improvement and cost effective management as the priority goals for the district. Within these two major goal areas the board resolved, in February 1981, to allocate resources and concentrate efforts on solving specific problems identified in several areas. The problem areas listed in order of priority were: (1) students' basic skills achievement, (2) staff evaluation, (3) student discipline, (4) attracting and holding students, (5) enrollment decline, and (6) increasing the effectiveness of specific schools. The district subsequently took coordinated action on all of the above.

- The present study focused on the actions taken regarding the needs identified in the second most important priority area, staff evaluation.** The needs assessment revealed that administrators, teachers, and supervisors perceived a lack of clear criteria for identifying effective teaching strategies and a lack of common standards for conducting teacher performance evaluations. There was general agreement that current evaluation practices needed revision. The seven most frequent suggested revisions were: (1) the development of mutually agreed upon goals that reflect both system and job objectives; (2) more time for direct contact/observation between the reviewer and the person being reviewed; (3) a style of personnel review that is more formative (i.e., support for improvement) than summative in nature; (4) build incentive systems that encourage and recognize quality of performance; (5) follow-through,

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*EKS Management Operations Information Exchange, Summer 1985.

**The first 31 pages of this report (largely descriptive) were based on: (1) information acquired during the interviews of central office and staff development team members; and (2) information gleaned from some 40-50 internal PRISM documents and publications obtained from district staff development team members and other school staff.

first for improvement, but failing progress, for accountability purposes; (6) broaden the participatory base and direction of personnel reviews, permitting self-assessment information to be included and encouraging input from staff on the performance of superiors; and (7) improve the current training/capability of those charged with the responsibility for reviewing personnel.

Planning and Start-up

In March 1981, the superintendent convened an Instructional Leadership Committee. The 20-member committee of principals, teachers, supervisors, and central office staff was charged with developing a unified plan for improving instruction, instructional leadership, and personnel evaluation in the district. The superintendent saw these three areas as being closely related and directed the committee to incorporate an instructional leadership model in the plan to serve as the foundation for improving both instruction and evaluation. In the course of reviewing the literature and discussing the task (March-June 1981), the committee reached a general consensus that the model chosen should meet the following research-related criteria. It should: (1) support the role of the teacher as a decision maker; (2) integrate or support the concepts of mastery learning theory; (3) address time-on-task; (4) be based on reinforcement theory; (5) incorporate student motivation theory; (6) be adaptable to a clinical mode of supervision; and (7) be research-based, practical and realistic. The committee also defined instructional leadership as "a process of actively influencing others to establish and use mutually agreed upon methods to achieve desired educational goals. An instructional leader is able to act in a manner which influences and teaches others how to bring about the most effective learning in pupils. This necessitates appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills."

After considering numerous models the committee decided that Madeline Hunter's Model of Effective Teaching best met the above criteria. In addition, in the committee's judgment, the Hunter model demonstrated the greatest flexibility and adaptability to all grade levels and all content areas. After reviewing the implementation efforts of other school districts using the Hunter model, the committee also decided to use Ted Forte, Director of Staff Development and Human Relations for the Norfolk, Virginia School District, as a project consultant. Following a Workshop on Instructional Skills (overview of Norfolk's staff development model) for the committee and an overview presentation for district administrators by Forte, the committee recommended that Pittsburgh adapt the Norfolk, Virginia School District's staff development-based instructional improvement and clinical supervision model to the needs of Pittsburgh.

The new program was called the Pittsburgh Research-Based Instructional Supervisory Model (PRISM). The primary goals of PRISM were to foster effective teaching through staff development programs designed to upgrade the observation and evaluation skills of principals, establish a common language of instruction and a set of standards for personnel evaluation, and provide clinical teaching experiences for both principals and teachers. A five-year timeline was proposed for the program with the intent that PRISM would become the standard for the formal evaluation of teacher performance once it was fully disseminated district-wide.

In June 1981, the Pittsburgh board of directors formally endorsed the recommendations of the Instructional Leadership Committee and authorized the formation of a staff development team (SDT) to plan, develop, and conduct PRISM training; monitor its implementation in the schools; and establish procedures for evaluating the program. The SDT consisted of a director (from central office) and four* associate directors or team members who were former administrators with extensive backgrounds in instructional supervision, curriculum development, and administration. Four of the team members had served on the Instructional Leadership Committee. The initial goals of the staff development team were to: (1) acquire the required theory by learning the Hunter model and modeling continuously all aspects of the theory; (2) develop training skills in teaching the content of the model through practice with each other and with the consultant; (3) establish credibility within the district by making simulation materials and films, and teaching students in Pittsburgh schools; and (4) design a system for staff development in Pittsburgh schools by organizing a permanent training center, designing training materials, and developing a process of involvement for administrators.

During July, August, and September 1981; the SDT addressed the above goals and related activities. They attended training sessions conducted by Ted Forte in Pittsburgh and in Indianapolis, and by Madeline Hunter in Boston. In Indianapolis they observed Forte training school district staff. They worked intensively both individually and as a team to: (1) develop the workshops for principals and teachers, based on their own learnings of the Hunter Effective Teaching Model, that defined the evolving PRISM program; and (2) design the system or procedure for its incorporation into the Pittsburgh school system. The team incorporated the elements of a R&D-based staff development model into the design of PRISM. The elements consisted of presentation of theory, demonstration or modeling of the skills being taught, guided practice by participants in simulated situations, provision of structured feedback regarding the practice, and follow-up on-site coaching of the participants during the actual application of the skills.

Overall, SDT members used several consultants in the first two years to assist with program conceptualization and/or aspects of training. Ted Forte was used for five days in the summer of 1981 to assist with planning. Fourteen months after the program was initiated, Ernie Stachowski, of Long Beach, California, was brought in for a day (October 1982) to assist with planning/training. Madeline Hunter was also brought in for a day at the end of the second year of the program to address a large group of school staff.

The long term role of the SDT involved the primary responsibility for conducting the inservice training and follow-up sessions for all district administrators involved with instruction. They were also assigned the addtional responsibilities of ongoing inservice related to instruction and PRISM implementation monitoring and evaluation. Overall, the program was

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*Currently, there are five associate directors or team members.

viewed as dynamic and evolving from Hunter's framework within the constraints of specific district goals. In that regard, the SDT monitored and adjusted their own activities and job descriptions in light of the project goals and resources. It was eventually decided that each SDT member would teach the adapted Hunter model and provide structured feedback to participants in the form of coaching and conferencing. The SDT also developed five coordinator roles to be split among team members: (1) the director would continue to coordinate the overall administration of the team, (2) the coordinator of research and evaluation would establish and implement an evaluation and monitoring system to assess and track district progress, (3) the coordinator of system-wide implementation would institute and maintain a system of follow-up resource support, (4) the coordinator of inservice training would develop and implement an action plan for related inservice programs, and (5) the coordinator of administrative growth and development would prepare and carry out programs to broaden the scope of educational leadership training. Each of the roles involved, to varying degrees, related materials preparation, liaison, and planning activities. A more detailed description of SDT roles/activities is presented in this report in the section, Implementation of District Supervision/Evaluation System, Organization and Process.

To a large extent, systematic program planning and needs sensing have continued throughout the duration of the project as SDT staff acquired increased experience, identified additional needs, conceived of ways to address those needs, and affected the required modifications and/or additions to the program. This systematic opportunistic approach to educational improvement was built into the design and organizational structure of the project. The project was conceived by the district as being dynamic in nature, and SDT staff and other core group staff have met with the superintendent on a regular basis since the inception of PRISM to expedite communications and decision-making. In that regard, by the summer of 1982, PRISM evolved into three separate but related program efforts, PRISM I, II, and III. Two years later, PRISM IV evolved.

In the words of the superintendent, "PRISM I is concerned with providing a consistent framework for the improvement and evaluation of instruction at all levels in the district. PRISM II is directed toward improving the instructional leadership of principals, supervisors and central office administrators. PRISM III is the district's effort to improve the quality of secondary education. PRISM IV is the districts effort to improve the quality of elementary education. All four PRISM programs are designed to improve the effectiveness of instruction and thus lead to a higher quality of student learning in the district."

The specific charge to the SDT, during program start-up in the 1981-82 school year was to:

- provide inservice training in the use of the Hunter model, at the district training center, for central office staff, principals, selected supervisors, and selected assistants

- conduct the inservice training in a manner that emphasized the role of the principal as the instructional leader

- work with the principals during training to improve skills in the use of the model, classroom observation, and conferencing
- maintain records to monitor the implementation of the program in each building
- provide instructional materials for principals to use
- advise principals in the inservice training of staff
- provide follow-up assistance to principals in classroom observations by attending observations and post-observation conferences and discussing both with the principal.

Program introduction consisted of a one-day inservice session conducted on five separate dates in September-October 1981 by Ted Forte and the SDT staff to provide an overview of the PRISM goals, content and timeline for all administrators, the board, the Pittsburgh Federation of teachers and PAA representatives. Administrators of like role assignments were assigned to each of the meetings.

Program Funding

Annual Costs

The PRISM program has been included as a line item in the district budget since its inception in 1981. The approximate costs per year have been:

Start-up	1981	$125,000	Salaries
		$ 5,000	Consultants
Continuation	1982	$352,797	
	1983	$684,939	
	1984	$508,373	
	1985	$532,449	

Allocation of Monies

In the start-up year, the majority of the PRISM program expenses were associated with the salaries for staff development team personnel and the clerical support staff involved in the effort. The salaries for the staff development team and related clerical support personnel have continued to comprise 30% to 40% of the annual cost of the program. The other program expense that has absorbed the bulk of the remaining annual program cost has been the expenditure of monies for teacher inservice salaries. These monies have been spent on salaries for the training of Schenley High Teacher Center resident and replacement teachers both during the summer and after school hours (PRISM III). Expenditures for consultants, materials and other miscellaneous costs have typically constituted less than two or three percent of the annual budget.

Source of Monies

The board has supported the program almost entirely from district monies since its inception. In 1983-84, the district received some outside support in the form of a Ford Foundation grant totaling $445,000 over a five-year period. These monies have been used to provide supplemental support to the Schenley High Teacher Center for such activities as evaluation studies, and project documentation. The board has also set a goal to obtain approximately $1,000,000 from local, private, corporate and family foundations to support a three-year ancillary services program called the Support Services Project. This project has been proposed to strengthen several aspects of the entire secondary school improvement effort, including adjunct aspects of the Schenley Teacher Center program such as teacher externships in the private sector, and community relations.

Staff Development: Content, Process and Evaluation

Administrators: Content and Process

PRISM I. Beginning in the 1981-82 school year, the staff development team initiated the training of central office staff, building principals, selected vice-principals, and supervisors in PRISM I content. PRISM I was divided into two stages. In Stage 1, all of the above staff received 30 hours of instruction in the following content:

- teaching to an objective
- selecting an objective at the correct level of difficulty
- monitoring the learner and adjusting teaching
- using, without abuse, the principles of learning
  - --motivation
  - --reinforcement
  - --sequence
  - --practice
- five types of conferencing:*
  - --the A conference: observer reviews what went well and tells why
  - --the B conference: observer identifies what went wrong and gives alternatives

*Conference types A, B, and C were stressed in initial training.

--the C conference: teacher is asked to identify what went wrong and both teacher and observer generate alternatives

--the D conference: observer identifies serious teaching errors and gives alternative corrections

--the E conference: stretching the excellent teacher to do even better

- anecdotal note-taking
- analysis of teaching
- lesson design
- application of the model--teaching and conferring by participants.

Administrators and supervisors could select one of four training groups or cycles scheduled over the year at a centralized training center. Each training cycle involved about 40 participants and consisted of five one-day (six-hour) training experiences spread over the period of about a month. Days one and two were offered consecutively. The remaining days were spaced over the month to afford practice of the model. Principals were directed to select two or three of their more effective teachers and practice observing, anecdotal note taking, lesson analysis, and conferring with these teachers both during and following training for the remainder of the year. Principals were also directed to teach lessons to students during training, for practice, understanding, and application of the model. Each SDT team member was assigned roughly 25 principals and/or supervisors and regularly observed their practice observation/conferencing sessions as coaches and provided feedback. Central office staff, including the superintendent, received their training in 10 one-half day sessions spread out over the 1981-82 school year.

Training consisted of a variety of activities including PRISM theory and demonstration sessions, identifying effective and ineffective teaching behaviors, observing videotapes of lessons and taking anecdotal notes, practice in lesson analysis, and practice in teaching their peers and post-conferencing, as well as critiquing the conferences of others. In essence, year one training was designed specifically for the principals' growth in PRISM and the Hunter Model. Practice, with a small number of teachers and follow-up coaching by the SDT trainers were, key elements in the training experience. During PRISM I, Stage 1 training, principals were expected to assume the leadership for introducing PRISM in their own buildings and explain to their staff the Stage 1 training they were undergoing. They were also expected to initiate the training of their own school staff in in-service sessions in the 1982-83 school year, with the assistance of materials and on-site help provided by the SDT trainers.

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In the summer of 1982, principals, selected vice-principals, and supervisors received ten days of additional clinical training by the SDT staff in Stage 2 of PRISM I. Stage 2, referred to as the P-T-O-C (Plan, Teach, Observe, Confer) cycle, involved principals in two five-consecutive-day workshops during which time they planned lessons and taught summer school students for one full period each day, observed/conferred the teaching of their peers, and were themselves observed/conferred on each daily lesson. Four blocks of five-day workshops were offered and principals selected the workshop blocks which fit their schedule. Participants thus received additional practice in anecdotal note-taking, conferencing, observing and providing feedback, and practice teaching the content of the model. They viewed videotapes of themselves, role played and viewed training films. More importantly they experienced how the model could be applied on a daily basis and developed a sensitivity of the multiple decisions involved in providing daily instruction for students.

The remainder of the district's deans, assistant principals and vice principals were trained in PRISM I, Stages 1 and 2 during the 1982-83 and 1983-84 school years. Practice in teaching the model during Stage 2 (P-T-O-C) of PRISM I training was done in regular classrooms during the year.

All principals, selected vice-principals, and supervisors were provided with additional PRISM I follow-up practice and training or coaching in the 1982-83, 83-84, and 84-85 school years. In each of these years, in addition to assuming the leadership for providing inservice to their own school staff in PRISM I, they were expected to conduct a minimum of three teacher observations and follow-up conferences per week, or 12 per month.* They were also visited, at least four times each year, by a SDT member who co-observed and analyzed a lesson, observed them post-conference the teacher, and provided them with feedback on their conference to insure that they were appropriately internalizing and applying the PRISM I instructional model and conferencing procedures. In the third year of the program, SDT staff spent more time with some principals; either those less skilled or new principals.

PRISM II. Training of administrative staff (principals, vice-principals, deans, supervisors and central office personnel) in PRISM II commenced in the summer of 1983 and has continued each summer since then. The primary long term goal of PRISM II is to enhance the instructional leadership knowledge, attitudes and skills of administrators. Each summer since 1983, the program has consisted of a series of supplemental workshops on various topics offered over a ten-day period the first year and a five-day period in subsequent years. In the first year, the topics covered such areas as questioning skills, classroom management techniques, parent involvement techniques, PRISM I, Stage 1 review, additional conferencing styles (D&E), and school team planning by building administrators to prepare for PRISM I, Stage 1 inservice for teachers.

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*The 12 observations/conferences per month requirement was reduced to six per month in early 1985.

The program has evolved since the summer of 1983 to the point where, in the summer of 1985 some 43 separate workshops or mini-courses ranging in total time from one and one-half to three hours each were offered. Some workshops are recommended or required of various administrative staff, based on their role. Other workshops are optional. All administrators are required to attend five days of training each summer and to sign up for courses so as to completely fill each six hour workshop day (i.e., a minimum of two or a maximum of four courses can be taken each day over the cycle, depending on the length of the courses chosen). The courses offered this past summer were clustered in five major areas: staff assessment, supervision, management, professional/personal growth, and curriculum.

SDT staff are continually operationally defining what is meant by instructional leadership in the context of the definition presented earlier. The planning of the annual summer workshops has been a collaborative effort between SDT staff and representatives of various administrative groups to tailor the PRISM II program to both individually perceived needs and district needs. As was noted above, one of the district needs that has been addressed in PRISM II has been the development of building level action plans by administrative teams to orchestrate the delivery of PRISM I inservice to their staff. The action plans have typically considered: administrators improvement needs regarding PRISM I, procedures for collecting data on teachers' needs, areas where PRISM I needs to be reviewed, specific arrangements (who, when, where, how) to teach new PRISM I content to staff, and other areas of staff development related to ongoing district school improvement efforts. In addition to providing the above structured experience and guidance to increase administrators' staff development skills, the SDT responded to a need to provide a structure for collegial support among administrators. Accordingly, several ongoing in-district regional networks were formed in the 1983-84 school year to provide principals with the opportunity to meet for one-half day, three or four times per year, to discuss and share PRISM implementation strategies and issues.

In summary, district administrators received some 90 hours of intensive in-class training in PRISM I, and have since received 30 hours of additional training in PRISM II each summer since 1983, to supplement the leadership skills required to become both an instructional leader and an educational leader. They have also received intensive on-site follow-up coaching and monitoring regarding the new roles that they have been expected to implement. In addition, beginning in the 1983-84 school year, secondary level administrators received four weeks of further orientation and training in connection with the start-up of the high school teacher center initiated that year. Similar orientation and training is planned for elementary level principals pending the start-up of the elementary school teacher center in the fall of 1985.

Teachers: Content and Process

PRISM I. The general training of the district's teachers K-12 in basic PRISM I content began in the 1981-82 school year. The first year was more of an introductory year, however, and principals worked with only a few teachers, primarily for their own benefit in acquiring the instructional and conferencing skills required by the model. The training of all teachers by

principals, vice-principals and supervisors, with the back-up support of SDT members, began in the 1982-83 school year. The inservice was accomplished via training activities, taught and coordinated by administrators, and through the principals' required twelve per month teacher observations and conferences. SDT staff provided support on request in the form of prepared instructional materials and on-site assistance with inservice. In preparation for their staff development role, each principal was initially required to assume responsibility for teaching four areas of the Hunter model. In later years they were held accountable for teaching all of the Hunter content.

The training, observation and conferencing of school staff by building administrators K-12 continued through the 1983-84 and 84-85 school years to the present. A considerable portion of the district's five half-day inservice times for each school was allocated to PRISM training over the past three years. In addition to the allocated inservice days, all elementary teachers are allotted one period per day to meet with their building principal or instructional supervisor for the purpose of improving instruction. This period is called Essential Staff Educational Practice (ESEP) time. In many buildings, principals in cooperation with teachers have also scheduled PRISM training, review, and/or discussion on single or double ESEP periods on a regular basis.

PRISM III. The Schenley High Teacher Center (SHTC) program, PRISM III, was initiated in the 1983-84 school year. A cross section of over 200 school, business, and community personnel contributed to the design of the teacher center via various planning committees in 1982-83. The program was designed primarily to: (1) provide an in-depth clinical teaching experience for all the district's secondary school teachers, (2) provide teachers with an update in their subject area(s) and review the district's expectations for those content area(s), (3) provide them with a more in-depth understanding of adolescent development and the relationship between students' development and academic behavior, and (4) afford them the opportunity to engage in independent study and/or internship activities to enhance their background for teaching. The program consists of three phases: (1) orientation at the home school, during which time teacher center staff, the teacher and the principal, plan a program to address the teacher's and the home school's needs; (2) an eight-week mini-sabbatical, during which the teacher participates in the model teacher center training activities; and (3) a follow-up phase, during which time a support structure is provided to assist the teacher in applying what has been learned at the teacher center.

During the eight weeks at the teacher center, the visiting teacher: (1) observes exemplary teaching in an ongoing school setting; (2) practices new instructional techniques and skills; (3) receives detailed feedback and analysis on that practice; (4) applies instructional theory to practice; (5) receives an update in the content of his/her subject area(s); (6) reviews and discusses recent research on effective teaching, classrooms, and schools; (7) studies adolescent behavior and its implications for effective teaching; and (8) researches a chosen topic for personal growth. The overall process involves participation in seminars with peers; the clinical

teaching experience; fulfillment of an individual study plan consisting of work with college, community and/or business personnel; and training in new technologies where appropriate, including computers. Follow-up activities consist of professional seminars by returning visiting teachers, participation in peer observations, PRISM content update sessions, and external-to-school activities (cross-school and/or business related visits).

By way of structure or design, the Schenley High School is a fully functioning high school in all respects. The staff consists of a cadre of resident teachers (RTs) who teach four classes per day and engage in a variety of other regular school support activities as well as activities in support of the visiting teachers; and a cadre of 24 clinical resident teachers (CRTs), about one-third of the total school staff, who teach three classes per day and also work in-depth with the visiting teachers. Each CRT works with two visiting teachers on intensive teaching clinics based on PRISM I's principles of effective instruction over the eight-week period. A cadre of 48 professional replacement teachers are also a part of the program. They take over the visiting teachers' roles in the home schools while the visiting teachers are at the model high school for eight weeks.

All staff for the program, RTs, CRTs and replacement teachers, were specifically recruited because of their effective teaching abilities. The RTs and CRTs received intensive training in PRISM I, Stages 1 and 2, by SDT staff prior to the start-up of the program. The replacement teachers were also trained in PRISM I, Stage 1. SDT staff participate on a regular basis in the teaching clinics between CRTs and visiting teachers, in addition to teaching PRISM at the center. The overall management of the model high school teacher center is shared by the school principal who deals with regular school staff and curriculum matters, and the teacher center director who is responsible for the planning, design modification, and daily operation of the program for the visiting teachers.

The PRISM III high school teacher center experience was designed for all the secondary teachers in the district's 15 high schools. Four quarterly cycles of approximately 48 teachers each, have been scheduled through the program each year since September 1983, and some 200 teachers have completed the program to date. It is expected that all secondary teachers will have experienced the program by the end of the 1986-87 school year. PRISM III has also involved, beginning in the 1984-85 school year, two ten-day visitations to the teacher center by high school administrators to: (1) provide them with a first-hand, in-depth understanding of the training their staff are receiving; (2) afford them the opportunity to initiate a support network regarding PRISM III follow-up; and (3) give them a chance to review current theory and research on supervision and educational leadership, and explore leadership-related externships in the business community for their own benefit. Thus, PRISM I, II, and III constitute a coordinated effort.

The district's initial focus on the secondary level (PRISM III) was somewhat of a pragmatic decision on the superintendent's part. The superintendent perceived that the student dropout and declining enrollment problems

at the secondary level were more serious than any problems at the elementary level. The district was projecting the layoff of a large number of secondary staff in the early/mid-1980s due to the declining secondary enrollment. Gearing up the Schenley High Teacher Center saved a number of staff positions and thus served as an incentive for the Teachers' Federation to cooperate with the improvement project. In essence, due to PRISM III's design, there is some double residency of teachers at the SHTC in addition to the 48 teachers who were kept on board to serve as replacement teachers for secondary staff visiting the SHTC for eight weeks. Thus, some 60-70 secondary level teaching positions were saved.

PRISM IV. The next phase of the improvement project, PRISM IV, will involve the opening of the Pittsburgh Elementary Model School (PEMS) in September 1985, to provide elementary school (K-5) staff with a clinical teaching experience similar to that currently being offered to secondary teachers at the high school teacher center, and further enhance elementary principals' instructional leadership skills. Planning for PEMS (PRISM IV) began in the spring of 1984 with the formation of an administrative steering committee which included SDT members. A planning task force comprised of three major committees (instructional process, school organization, and formative evaluation) and numerous sub-committees was charged with planning PEMS. Teachers and other support staff were brought into the planning process in September 1984. Planning and preparations continued through the 1984-85 school year. The district expects that all elementary school staff will participate in PEMS in six training cycles per year over the next three-and-one-half years.

Similar to the model high school teacher center, PEMS will involve RTs, CRTs, and replacement teachers. However, some organizational differences in design are planned. Elementary teachers will spend seven days with the SDT at the district's central training center, followed by ten days at the model elementary school. Three days of formal teacher follow-up by the CRTs and SDT staff in the teachers' home schools are also planned along with structured peer observation at the home school, for a total of 20 days (4 weeks) of systematic PEMS, PRISM IV training experience.

The program was shortened because it was felt that elementary teachers could afford to spend less time away from their more dependent students than secondary teachers; and the elementary teachers already had a stronger PRISM I foundation than the secondary teachers due to the fact that elementary principals have traditionally been more active in instructional leadership, and due to their increased exposure to PRISM I via the use elementary staff have made of their scheduled ESEP time over the past few years.

It also bears noting that the district decided to save the middle-schools for last, regarding more in-depth PRISM training. The middle schools are newer and their staff have had more recent training and more training than either elementary or secondary level staff.

Evaluation of Staff Development

From the very inception of the PRISM project, the district incorporated systematic evaluation procedures to monitor, adjust and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of PRISM. The evaluation work has been carried out by the district's Office of Testing and Evaluation (OT&E) and other Pittsburgh area college and university staff, with major support also being provided by the Evaluation Unit of the Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC) of the University of Pittsburgh. PRISM evaluation has focused on three major activities: (1) the maintenance by LRDC of archival descriptive records, field notes and documentation of program planning, development and implementation activities, to provide a chronological record of program decision making and implementation to inform program leadership staff and facilitate subsequent planning; (2) the conduct of formative evaluation activities by OT&E and LRDC staff (e.g., surveys, interviews, critical analyses of materials and on-site observations of program implementation) to provide data to program staff to assist them in continuously modifying and improving the program; and (3) the conduct of impact studies by OT&E staff and others (e.g., surveys, tests, quasi-experimental research, value assessments, attitude changes, classroom observations) to determine if the program is having the intended effects on teachers' and administrators' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.

The purpose of this paper is not to describe in detail the evaluation of PRISM, but to provide an overview or sampling of the types of evaluation activities conducted. For example, all PRISM training activities have included an end-of-training survey of participants' perceptions of the effectiveness and utility of training. Following PRISM I training, principals were asked to rate the degree to which the workshop was well organized, met the objectives, helped to increase their understanding of the model, and would help them to function more effectively. They were also asked to comment on the most valuable things they learned, specifically how the model would help them improve their teaching or conferencing, how the session leaders could be more effective, whether they desired more training or support and in what areas, and their general suggestions for additional workshops and for improving the workshops.

Post-training surveys have also been conducted following the training sessions for teachers. Similarly, exit interviews have been conducted with the visiting teachers at the high school teacher center to tap their perceptions of the program's utility and their recommendations for changes in the program. In addition, data have been collected on the implementation of the required teacher observations/conferences and the required PRISM in-service of teachers in their home schools. These formative evaluation activities have assisted SDT and other core staff in making a number of structural changes in the PRISM programs to improve their effectiveness and utility.

A number of other short-term and long-term studies either have been conducted, are in progress, are planned, or are ongoing efforts. These studies will or have focused on specifics related to: (1) the efficacy of

the replacement and visiting teachers, replacement process; (2) behavioral changes in visiting teachers' classroom performance with respect to PRISM behaviors and time-on-task following attendance at the teacher center; (3) the efficacy of the RT, CRT, visiting teacher process and problems attendant to the new roles and relationships; (4) visiting teachers changes in attitudes toward students, the profession, etc.; (5) model high school teacher center students' perceptions of the school climate; (6) changes in the academic performance of the students at the model high school; (7) visiting social studies teachers' progress in implementing the components of a critical thinking program; (8) principals' perceptions of their involvement in the high school teacher center program, of related follow-up activities, and the selection-program process for visiting teachers; (9) the effects on home school students of the visiting teacher/replacement teacher process; (10) principals' perceptions, over time, of the efficacy/utility of PRISM training and its impact on schools, in part, in the context of the original district needs assessment; and (11) the implementation and perceived utility/fairness of the new end-of-the-year, formal teacher evaluation procedure, and the effects of PRISM on said procedure.

The studies that are ongoing or that have been completed have generally found either positive outcomes or outcomes that were developing in the intended direction. They have also identified implementation problems for SDT and SHTC staff consideration and action. For example, a study of principals' perceptions of PRISM's effects reported by LRDC staff in September 1984, found that district professionals: (1) had a clearer understanding, systemwide, of instructional expectations; (2) found the criteria for evaluating teacher instructional effectiveness to be clearer; (3) perceived a more effective articulation of instruction across levels; (4) found the inservice to be more relevant to building needs; and (5) were ready to take on new skills related to curriculum needs. The report also cited perceived problems, cited here in part, with PRISM paperwork, the heavy observation/conferencing schedule, finding time for curriculum work, and a desire for even more tailored inservice sessions for administrative staff.

Evaluation therefore has been and continues to be an ongoing component of PRISM planning, implementation, and follow-up. In the words of the superintendent (Wallace, 1985), "the general results (of the evaluation) indicate an unpredictably high level of enthusiasm for the program. The data also indicate that principals are taking the program seriously. Data gathered with respect to the implementation of PRISM II indicate that about one-third of the principals in the district have embraced and to some extent put into operation the concepts implicit in the model. Approximately another third of the principals are still struggling with many aspects of the model. And about one-third of the administrators are trying very hard to avoid the concept hoping that the expectations will somehow 'go away'."

The following chart summarizes the overall staff development schedule and timeline for PRISM.

Staff Development Schedule/Timeline
(Implementation Phases)

Month - Year	PRISM Training Provided: Content, Audience and Process	Approximate Number Trained
September 1981 - June 1982	• PRISM I, Stage 1 instructional leadership training for all principals and supervisors (mandatory)	200 Principals and Supervisors (30 hrs)
	--five, five-day training cycles each spread over one month. Training in instructional theory and clinical supervision. Coaching of each trained administrator on site as he/she worked with selected teachers.	600 Teachers* (5 hours of PRISM I, Stage 1)
July 1982	• PRISM I, Stage 2 P-T-O-C (Plan, Teach, Observe, Confer) training of principals during summer school.	84 Principals (30 hrs)-- (ten days, three hours each day)
September 1982 - June 1983	• Mandatory weekly observations by all principals and supervisors (accompanied by coaching of administrators on site) along with initial training of school staffs by administrators...(continued each year to the present date).	3,000 Teachers (4 hrs of PRISM I, Stage 1)
	• Mandatory PRISM I, Stages 1 & 2 training of vice principals, deans, and new administrators, plus PRISM I, Stage 2 P-T-O-C training of supervisors.	40 Vice-principals and Deans plus 12 New Administrators (60 hrs) 65 Supervisors (30 hrs)

*The time figure(s) cited for training teachers in PRISM I, Stage 1 represent the mode across schools.

Staff Development Schedule/Timeline
(Implementation Phases)

Month - Year	PRISM Training Provided: Content, Audience and Process	Approximate Number Trained
July 1983	• Initiation of mandatory PRISM II instructional leadership supplemental training of administrative staff primarily in leadership knowledge, attitudes, and skills other than PRISM. Some required and some optional courses: (e.g., questioning skills, communication skills, school team planning for inservice, additional conferencing styles, Stage 1 review, curriculum content, principal networks)...Continued each summer to the present date... 43 mini-courses or workshops offered in the summer of 1985.	200 Administrators (30 hrs each summer since 1983)
September 1983 - June 1984	• Continuation of weekly observations by all administrators plus on-site coaching.	
	• Continued training of school staffs.	3,000 Teachers (4 hrs of PRISM I, Stage 1 review)
	• PRISM I, Stage 1 training for district counselors.	85 Counselors (30 hrs)
	• PRISM I, Stages 1 & 2 training of new administrators.	15 Administrators (60 hrs)
	• PRISM I, Stage 2 P-T-O-C training for assistant school-based administrators.	40 Administrators (30 hrs)

Staff Development Schedule/Timeline
(Implementation Phases)

Month - Year	PRISM Training Provided: Content, Audience and Process	Approximate Number Trained
September 1983 - June 1984 (continued)	• PRISM III High School Teacher Center program initiated. Four, eight-week training cycles per year for visiting secondary school teachers. Training in PRISM I, teaching clinics, peer conferencing models, adolescent behavior, content area update, individual study. Includes two, ten-day orientation and study experiences for secondary principals.	192 Secondary school teachers (30 hrs of PRISM I, Stage 1 plus considerable additional training)
September 1984 - June 1985	• PRISM I, Stages 1 & 2 training of new administrators.	15 Administrators (60 hrs)
	• Continued training of school staff.	3,000 Teachers (4 hrs of PRISM I, Stage 1 review)
	• PRISM III High School Teacher Center program continued.	192 Secondary School Teachers (see above)
	--In addition to ongoing informal evaluation, initiate formal evaluation of teacher center.	40 Intermediate Unit Teachers (see above)
September 1985 - June 1986	• PRISM III High School Teacher Center program continued.	
	• PRISM IV Elementary School Teacher Center program to be initiated.	

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Implementation of District Supervision/Evaluation System

Philosophy/Policy

The district's philosophy regarding teacher supervision and evaluation are presented best in a paper by the superintendent (Wallace, 1985), juxtaposed sections of which are cited below:

> Personnel evaluation was established as the district's second highest educational priority. In so doing, the Board of Education reflected its own views as well as those of community members and school district employees. Essentially, the survey data revealed that respondents believed that too many teachers and administrators were not performing their duties effectively and this condition needed to be corrected. (p.13)

> The superintendent perceived that two alternatives were available in responding to this priority. The first alternative would have been to use the existing evaluation systems and embark on a "witch hunt" to identify the ineffective personnel and then seek to demote or discharge them. The second alternative would be to seek to increase the quality of supervision and evaluation and set out to improve the performance of all personnel in the district; this approach would require that the performance expectations for all personnel be carefully detailed and that persons be observed and provided with structured feedback to improve performance. The first alternative is clearly punitive in nature and would likely produce negative side effects among teachers and administrators. It would probably create an atmosphere of negativism that could prove detrimental to the more positive improvement thrust of the Board. The second alternative is improvement oriented and is designed to make good teachers and administrators better while at the same time identifying those who need significant improvement. The latter approach would still induce some anxiety among teachers and administrators, yet it would be approached in a constructive spirit of providing persons an opportunity to improve their performance. The latter approach places professionals in a helping relationship with one another to bring about a positive improvement in the state of educational affairs. The constructive approach was selected to improve personnel evaluation procedures and the general level of professional performance in the district. This plan became known as PRISM-Pittsburgh Research-based Instructional Supervisory Model. (pp.13-14)

PRISM I has four essential components: (1) knowledge training; (2) skill development; (3) follow up coaching; and (4) colleague networks. PRISM I is based on the following assumptions: (1) that personnel evaluation will be enhanced when teachers, administrators, and their evaluators are engaged in a dialog that focuses on clear communication of expectations for job performance in that role; (2) that a consistent framework of effective teaching based on research findings exists and can be taught, learned and applied; (3) that teachers, administrators, and supervisors can be trained to observe performance, gather evidence with respect to that performance and provide structured feedback that will cause that performance to be improved; (4) that if teachers and administrators are unable to improve their performance after careful role clarification, reasonable observation and feedback, and specific training, then action will be taken to terminate their employment. (p.14)

PRISM II is the district's program to improve the instructional leadership skills of principals, supervisors and central office personnel. PRISM II has been developed because most principals have not been trained as instructional leaders; degree and certificate programs for administrators have tended to focus primarily on the management aspects of schooling. Many administrators are not prepared to cope with the current emphasis on instructional leadership. Not only has their training not prepared them to assume this role, most school boards and school districts have not expected this. Principals, often are selected for their positions because they are good at public relations or good at discipline. More often than not, supervisors of instruction at the elementary, middle and secondary level are better prepared to offer "content centered" instructional leadership. However, they often lack the status and the power to exercise potent leadership. Thus with the new emphasis on educational improvement, the nation finds its schools staffed with many principals who are not well prepared to assume this new instructional leadership role. (pp.17-18)

PRISM II is based on the following assumptions: (1) instructional leadership can be defined, implemented, and evaluated; (2) all principals can become instructional leaders; (3) most principals will need substantial training in order to develop the knowledge-base and the skills to provide instructional leadership; (4) the process of developing instructional leadership can be facilitated by establishing collegial networks of administrators. The training workshops, and the coaching of PRISM I serves as the foundation for PRISM II. Above and beyond PRISM I, however,

> principals and other administrators must have a knowledge-base with regard to curriculum models and instructional techniques. Principals need to know enough about organizational development and the educational change process to furnish an environment for teachers that is likely to produce a focus on instruction. (p.18)
>
> The High School Teacher Center (PRISM III) is the Pittsburgh School District's response to the Board of Education's priority to increase the effectiveness of instruction at the secondary level. It also reflects the district's need to reduce the high school drop out rate. The Teacher Center program is based on the following assumptions: (1) that secondary teachers can be engaged productively in a 'clinical experience' that will cause them to reflect upon and improve their teaching techniques as they observe other teachers, analyze instruction, teach and receive feedback on their own instructional techniques; (2) that we can develop an instructional dialog that will tend to break down the instructional isolation experienced by most secondary teachers; (3) that by providing opportunities for teachers to participate in lectures and seminars they will upgrade their skills and knowledge in their content area; (4) that by participation in seminars on the adolescent, teachers will gain greater understanding of and increased skill in dealing with today's urban youth. (pp.20-21)

Implicit in the district's philosophy and staff development approach to teacher supervision and evaluation is the superintendent's philosophy of educational leadership. In the paper cited above, Wallace commented as follows on his views of educational leadership:

> Leadership can be defined in many ways. Expressed very simply, it can be described as a process of working with and through other people to get a job done. Educational leadership, at the level of the superintendent, requires extensive goal setting, planning, implementation and evaluation related to instruction. The author views the following as some of the key components of effective educational leadership by the superintendent of education:
>
> - Educational leadership must be data driven.
> - Participative planning is critical.
> - Respect must be communicated to teachers and principals who develop programs.
> - Risk taking is essential if progress is to be made.

- Knowledge of the change process is important.
- One must have a vision of good education.
- Follow through is essential.
- Recognition of the key role of principals in school improvement is vital.
- Routine administrative matters must be delegated.
- The superintendent must model the instructional leadership behavior that will be expected of principals and other administrators. If principals observe the superintendent engaged in data analysis, planning, developing, implementing and evaluating instructional initiatives, they can adapt those behaviors to their own responsibility. If the superintendent models the behaviors listed above, the stage is set for administrators to play a similar role. (pp. 29-31)

The district's philosophy of teacher supervision and evaluation, and the central role that staff development plays in improving that process in the context of PRISM are further reflected in the following partial excerpts of a paper, Two years Into PRISM (Marshall and Radvak, 1983), by SDT staff:

> The monitoring component of the program in the schools has come to be called "coaching on site." It is this role that the SDT feels is the key ingredient in the ultimate acceptance of PRISM in the schools. It is essential to the process that one grasps the significance of the concept of coaching--that successful use of newly acquired techniques require practice, and that one may be working on only one or a few development areas at a time. It is necessary to break down the historical view of in-service which says that once something happens in training, the expected change in behavior transfers automatically and completely to the work site. The SDT tries to provide feedback in appropriate increments to the administrators; and administrators, in turn, try to remember to deal with circumscribed areas each time they confer with teachers.
>
> A problem that the SDT has encountered is to convince others that, because 250 administrators "have gone through the training" and 3,000 teachers "will have been taught PRISM," it is not thereby time to move on to something else. The complex task of analyzing and discussing teaching for the purpose of positively reinforcing and practicing the multitude of sound teaching behaviors or of modifying less desirable ones is a very challenging process and requires time.

> In this freeze-dried generation where change over time is an alien concept, it is difficult to slow down the process so that in fact the transfer of newly acquired or refurbished skills from the knowledge to the application level will occur with administrators and teachers alike.
>
> In conjunction with the time element, there is the level of trust that needs to be developed between the SDT and the administrators in training and between the administrators and their teachers. Moving from a traditional summative procedure (in which teachers are observed once a year for purposes of evaluation) to a formative one (in which frequent observations and conferences take place for purposes of development) requires the belief that the intention is to improve instruction not to get rid of instructors.
>
> That belief is indeed occurring thanks in large measure to the skills and commitment of the Pittsburgh administrators. They have taken the positive message of PRISM to their staff members who are joining with them in, as one teacher put it, thoughtful "informal professional dialogue" about effective instruction.
>
> One might argue that staff development is simply an on-going function of supervision and that there's nothing especially urgent about developing new models; but the limited growth and resources familiar to our times would seem to indicate that it must be at the forefront of educational thought and activity. The era of staff development is here. Few school staffs have a majority of new teachers. The older among us have not been in college classrooms as students for a long time. New ideas about learning and the learner have emerged. A staff development program is one way to keep a school system not only current, but reaching into the future. (pp. 4-5)

Requirements

Supervision. Starting in September 1982-83 through February of the 1984-85 school year, the district required that all principals conduct 12 PRISM-related classroom observations/conferences per month. Through the greater part of the first year principals focused on A, B, and C-type conferences; D and E-type conferences and the refinement conferences were introduced toward the end of the 1982-83 school year. In the refinement conference the principal and teacher discuss "what went well and why." They also discuss "factors which may have impeded the progress of the lesson" and determine specific procedures to "add a piece to the teacher's teaching," to address those factors which impeded progress. Follow-up is also planned.

Generally, the announced or unannounced PRISM observations/conferences conducted in the first year-and-a-half were brief; 10-15 minutes of classroom observation followed by 10-15 minutes of conferencing. The emphasis was also primarily on the positive; what the teachers were doing well. It was the district's philosophy that, given the large number of required observations, principals would get to see each teacher a sufficient number of times over the year, to get a picture of his/her performance. The district also wanted teachers to receive positive feedback to build trust. The number of times teachers have been observed each year has ranged from 3 or 4 to 10 or 12 depending on the size of the school's faculty.

In the 1984-85 school year, principals were directed to conduct more refinement conferences in order to begin to address more systematically and more in-depth the needs perceived in teachers' performance. The number of required conferences was reduced to six per month, in February 1985, in order to permit principals to engage in these refinement observations/conferences which each take from one to one-and-one-half hours. Principals were also directed to identify one or two teachers as "focus teachers" and to work in-depth with these staff over the year to enhance their teaching skills. It should be noted that no formal records of the content of individual teacher observations/conferences have been shared with central office staff to date. The PRISM Observation and Conference Logs, and anecdoted observation notes are kept by principals in their own files and are not sent "up-town," nor are they a part of a teacher's permanent file. Similarly, "focus teachers" are not publicly identified and are worked with unobtrusively by principals. The focus of PRISM has been on training and helping and not on accountability for annual evaluation purposes.

Evaluation. For the purposes of annual accountability the district has used the state required DEBE-333 evaluation form over the past several years. The district requires that non-tenured employees be observed/rated twice a year and tenured employees once a year. Approximately 90% of the teachers are tenured and are rated once a year. Observations conducted for the purpose of annual rating are announced as such. District staff noted that it is difficult to separate teacher supervision from teacher evaluation. The data from the supervisory observations do feed into the end-of-the-year teacher evaluations. The purposes of the supervisory observations, however, are broader than evaluation. They are improvement oriented and involve follow-up. They noted that teachers are also expected to teach certain curriculum and that enters into their DEBE-333 evaluation.

The Observation and Conference Report for Professional Employees and/or the Critical Incident Report forms used by the district for annual evaluation, in support of the DEBE-333, differ in format from the PRISM Observation and Conference Log. In cases where "below average" or "unsatisfactory" ratings are given, at least three formal observations of reasonable length (e.g., at least one-half period each) are required along with the supporting observation reports. PRISM Observation and Conference Logs are not to be used. However, support offered to teachers through PRISM can be

cited. When teachers are rated as satisfactory, no supporting observation report data are required to be sent to the central office. Anecdotal citations for exemplary teacher performance are encouraged but not required by the district. Two unsatisfactories in a row constitute grounds for dismissal of a teacher. All teachers receive copies of their DEBE-333 ratings and Observation and Conference Reports, and may arrange to discuss them with the principal. Ratings are not grievable. Teachers may, however, file a rebuttal which becomes part of the teacher's permanent personnel file. District staff also noted that teacher evaluations have played no part in any district layoffs.

Over the period of the 1984-85 school year a district committee including teachers, federation representatives, central office personnel, and SDT staff worked to revise the standard DEBE-333 state form and obtain the state's approval of the modifications. The district plans to commence using the new annual evaluation form, which more accurately reflects the district's instructional emphasis via PRISM, in the 1985-86 school year. The merger of PRISM instructional concepts/terminology with the annual evaluation instrument represents a significant milestone in the district's implementation of the TS/E improvement effort. It bears noting, however, that the district waited some four years, allowing adequate time for program growth, acceptance and maturation, before formally effecting the planned merger.

Organization and Process

The district's in-school supervision process is carried out by the school principals, assistant or vice-principals, supervisors and division heads. All these staff are active in carrying out various aspects of PRISM observations/conferences. The observation load in a given school ranges from 19 to 25 teachers in elementary schools to 100 to 200 staff in some secondary schools. As was previously noted supervision related staff development activities have primarily been the responsibility of the SDT staff with the assistance of the CRTs in the model high school teacher center. Principals and their assistants have had the additional responsibility for PRISM staff development in their schools. The above school-based staff are expected to spend approximately 20% of their time on supervisory related activities.

Formal, regular classroom teacher evaluation for accountability purposes is the primary responsibility of the principals. Principals, however, may use the evaluation reports of other supervisory support personnel (vice principals, supervisors, etc.) to supplement their own annual teacher ratings, especially in cases where below average or unsatisfactory ratings are involved. The district director of personnel and employee relations has the formal management responsibility for the district's overall personnel evaluation system.

As noted earlier, SDT members engage in three primary activities; follow-up coaching of administrators, teaching PRISM content, and special activities related to their respective coordinator roles. They estimate that they spend approximately one-third of their time in each of the three areas. A chart outlining their organization and division of labor is presented below.

PRISM Staff Development Team: Organization, Roles/Activities

Team Members	Follow-up Coaching of Administrators	Teaching/ PRISM Clinics	Special Roles/ Activities
A	Coaches 14 high school principals and 30 high school vice principals (4 times per year) Also monitors/ assists with begining-of-year plans	- Teaches PRISM and conducts teacher clinics at the Schenley High Teacher Center (SHTC)	- Coordinates System-Wide Implementation, and Follow-Up for the SHTC - Involved heavily in initial internal PRISM planning and curriculum development - Working with the instructional chairpersons at the high school. Will train them this summer to assume PRISM improvement roles - Conducts seminars on "transfer" and IEPs - Teaches new groups of administrators
B	- Coaches all middle school and special school principals = 19 buildings (4 times per year) - Also monitors/ assists with beginning-of-year plans	- Teaches PRISM and conducts teacher clinics at the SHTC	- Coordinates PRISM evaluation and documentation. Responsible for liaison with internal/ external evaluation staff and for observation and inservice reports - Active on committee revising the DEBE-333

Team Members	Follow-up Coaching of Administrators	Teaching/ PRISM Clinics	Special Roles/ Activities
			- Developed/teaches units on "questioning skills and classroom management" - Conducts seminar on concept attainment - Documents SHTC interactions and suggests improvements - Worked on refining the "teaching clinic" at SHTC (i.e., group observation/analysis/ feedback of a teaching episode)
C	- Coaches 18 elementary school principals and vice principals (4 times per year) - Also monitors/assists with beginning-of-year plans	- Teaches PRISM and conducts teacher clinics at the SHTC	- Coordinates the development/ conduct of PRISM II Inservice Instructional Leadership Workshops for principals - Training 4 administrative assistants to help vice principals when school principals visit the SHTC for 20 days - Working on a resource book to give administrators alternative ways of addressing fixed management tasks in the district

Team Members	Follow-up Coaching of Administrators	Teaching/ PRISM Clinics	Special Roles/ Activities
D	- Coaches 18 elementary school principals and vice principals (4 times per year) - Also monitors/ assists with beginning-of-year plans	- Teaching role at SHTC	- Coordinating the planning/development of the principal's experience at the proposed Pittsburgh Elementary Model School (PEMS) (i.e., administrator growth and development) - Conducts 2 seminars at the SHTC - Developing a transcript/management system of everything that has been offered regarding PRISM and of "who's taken what" - Helped develop and teach a workshop on class management and discipline at the SHTC - Provided 30 hours of PRISM instruction to principals not hit earlier - Serves as liaison for business/education partnerships-externships for SHTC participants

Team Members	Follow-up Coaching of Administrators	Teaching/ PRISM Clinics	Special Roles/ Activities
E*	- Coaches 12 elementary school principals (4 times per year) Also monitors/ assists with beginning-of-year plans	- Teaches PRISM I content	- Serves as a resource person for the four elementary principals' support network clusters - Working on the development of an instructional package on "grouping procedures" for secondary school teachers and supervisors. Will pilot in Sept. 1985 - Developed a PRISM Primmer book as a resource for principals and supervisors - Worked on the design of the PEMS. Will help train PEMS staff - Helped with the design of the questioning and discussion skills inservice packet
SDT Project Director			- Responsible for coordination of the SDT: management, budget, liaison and communications. Sits on the superintendent's cabinet

*SDT team member E has been with the SDT since January 1985, when an original SDT member took a sabbatical. Members A, B, D, and the director have been with the team since its inception. SDT member C was an additional team member added in October 1984.

System Monitoring

The district has employed an extensive monitoring system, to track the implementation of PRISM. Principals have been required to submit monthly observation reports to the SDT. The monthly reports summarize the total number and type of observations/conferences conducted, the number of teachers observed and the number of times each was observed, the subject areas in which the observations were conducted, and the PRISM content areas most frequently discussed in the conferences. They are also required to submit mid-year and end-of-the-year progress reports on PRISM, and other staff development activities carried out in their schools. These latter reports describe: (1) the school's progress in achieving the goals outlined in the schools' annual PRISM plan; (2) the district support staff used by the school and their specific role(s) in the inservice program; (3) the principals' PRISM networking/collegial support activities and comments/reactions/recommendations thereto; (4) the PRISM II instructional leadership activities in which the principals participated; (5) the timeline, personnel involved, and follow-up of PRISM inservice training in ten specific PRISM I, Stage 1 areas; and (6) the principals' general assessment of the impact of PRISM in the school along with recommendations--accompanied by sample agendas, handouts, objectives and evaluations. Principals also describe their PRISM activities in their annual MBO report to the deputy and associate deputy superintendent.

Members of the SDT have also maintained Staff Development Coaching Logs to document their coaching activities with principals. SDT staff log the particular types of coaching activities they engage in, in each coaching session or visit--that is, checking the principal's observation/conferencing log, notes and dates; co-planning the conference; assisting with anecdotal note analysis; observing the conference; coaching the conferencer; assisting with inservice planning; reviewing the school's PRISM plan, and/or teaching specific content to select school staff. The specific objectives of the coaching sessions, significant coaching session activities, and the planned follow-up activities of all parties involved are also documented. When assisting principals and other staff with the conduct of refinement conferences, SDT staff provide feedback on the quality of the conferencer's preparation/data analysis, introduction/climate formation, diagnosis/perception check, reinforcement/skill maintenance focus, and teaching/skill development focus activities via a structured feedback form.

The coaching data cited above are confidential, as are the principals' PRISM observations of teachers, and are used to monitor/adjust coaching activities and assess needs for additional formal training in PRISM I and II. In 1984-85, a more formal attempt by SDT staff to rate principals' overall instructional leadership behaviors, using a structured instrument, was met with considerable resistance by the principals--even though the intent was formative in nature. An additional task of the SDT, over that year, was to compile a record and set up a system to describe all the training related to PRISM I, II and III that every staff member in the district

has experienced to date. Finally, SDT staff have also used a 50-item PRISM Knowledge Assessment quiz to assess staffs' long-term retention of PRISM I, Stage 1 concepts (25 items are true-false, the remainder are constructed response). Principals took the quiz in the summer of 1984 and teachers received it in the fall of 1984. The quiz results gave SDT staff an overview of staffs' cognitive acquisition of PRISM concepts and identified areas where additional review was needed.

Administrators' Perceptions

Two high school principals, including the principal of the high school teacher center, three middle (6-8) and five elementary school principals were interviewed for their perceptions of the district's teacher supervision/evaluation system.

Relationship Between Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

The principals generally made a clear distinction between the helping role of the PRISM supervision process and the accountability role of evaluation. Basically, they saw the two processes as being related in content, but separated in time, purpose, and process. Although they indicated that the data collected in PRISM observations for supervision purposes influenced their teacher evaluation judgments, they still perceived supervision as improvement oriented.

Some typical comments included these. "PRISM is not an evaluative tool. It's a supervisory model to promote learning and instruction. One (supervision) leads to the other (evaluation) though." "The goal (of supervision) is to help teachers do a better job; to provide help before due process. The DEBE-333 and the observations are related." "The purpose of PRISM is to improve instruction. The DEBE-333 won't improve instruction. No records (for accountability) are kept of PRISM observations." "We're instructed to supervise for the explicit purpose of improving teachers; all can improve. I see them as related though; evaluation follows supervision." "They somehow blend together but the PRISM model has made all staff conscious of when we're observing for supervision and when we're evaluating. Our former process wasn't related to instructional practices and missed (omitted) the positive reinforcement of teachers. PRISM lets teachers know what they are doing right. Now they are less anxious about evaluation."

Utility of PRISM I and II Training

Without exception the principals praised the utility and quality of the PRISM training they had received. They commented positively on such things as: the development of a common language of instruction; the guidelines for helping to improve instruction; the concrete modeling and practice; the coaching involved in training and in follow-up; and the ongoing, in-depth, high quality of the SDT refresher workshops and summer workshops.

Over a third commented on their increased confidence in supervising teachers to improve instruction, and half expressed a desire to participate in refresher workshops and/or any new workshops the SDT might develop on new R&D in teaching. However, two or three indicated that the district was approaching the "overkill point" regarding PRISM training.

Feasibility of Implementation

All of the principals reported that they generally were comfortable in their dual role as teacher supervisors and teacher evaluators. All also described their implementation of the process pretty much in accord with the district's model and requirements, and reported spending from 15% to 25% of their time on supervision and evaluation. At least half commented further that the supervision and evaluation process was easier now, because they had so much data (anecdotal notes) in front of them when they sat down to confer with teachers, that the teachers were surprised and/or impressed. Two specific examples were also cited of work with initially reluctant/uncooperative teachers who did not meet the district's instructional standards. It was pointed out that the union supported the principal's work with these teachers and acceptable improvements have since occurred.

At least half of the principals noted that finding time for their new role was a problem, and also indicated that the amount of paperwork involved for the monitoring/reporting process was an issue with principals. Two indicated that the district had responded to principals' requests to reduce the required number of conferences per month. Over two-thirds stated that they were now spending even more time with selected teachers who they felt needed assistance. None of the principals related any major problems at present with their staff development role. They cited the initial continuing assistance of SDT staff with teacher inservice, and elaborated on their own contributions to PRISM inservice and the emphasis they have placed on it. The general impression that came across, overall, was that they felt they were well trained and felt good about what they were doing.

Impact of Supervision

All of the principals felt that the PRISM inservices and the related supervisory observations have had a positive impact on teachers. They perceived that the majority of teachers generally viewed the program positively, accepted it, agreed that it had effected their teaching skills, and were aware that the PRISM observations were for improvement purposes only. Among the positive teacher-related outcomes cited were: teachers' increased sensitivity to students; sensitivity to their own strengths and needs regarding lesson design and implementation; increased awareness of effective teaching strategies; focus on the elements of lesson design; an increased sense of professionalism among high school staff; and development of a common language of instruction among all staff. Principals also perceived an increase in their rapport with teachers and increased support for teachers.

They attributed the effects of the program to the quality inservice materials and support made available by SDT staff; the relevance of the inservice content; the sustained nature of inservice (three and one-half years of PRISM input and review sessions); and the positively reinforcing, constructive and confidential nature of the classroom observations of teachers. A few principals noted that although most staff have bought into the program, "a few are still not tickled by it." They reported there was some variability among buildings in how it was introduced and in the degree to which it was emphasized. They felt that "the full word about the entire district package never reached some people." They concluded that teachers' acceptance had "a lot to do with the boss and with the trust/respect that he/she developed."

Impact of Evaluation

The common perception among principals was that "teachers take the DEBE-333 evaluation in somewhat of a low key, routine, pro forma fashion." Most felt it had little impact on teachers' behavior except in those cases where unsatisfactory ratings were given. It is done to satisfy the state requirement. Most principals also reported spending relatively little time on the DEBE-333. Three of the principals stated, however, that they spent 30 to 45 minutes on each evaluation. They add individualized reinforcing notes or letters to each teacher evaluation pointing out the positive attributes, contributions and areas of growth of each teacher based on specific occurrences over the previous year.

There is also a growing perception among principals that the pro forma nature of evaluation is changing. Comments heard were: "The superintendent has shown he believes in giving unsatisfactory ratings. He's modeled it." "The superintendent stated that there are unsatisfactory teachers in the district. Now, let's do something about it. Unsatisfactories were unheard of a few years ago; now principals are doing it more."

These perceptions were verified by district central office staff who reported that there has been an upward trend in the district in the number of unsatisfactory teacher evaluations given. In previous years, 3 or 4 unsatisfactories per year were the average. In the past two years, 12 to 14 unsatisfactory ratings were given each year. Last year (1983-84), 4 of the 12 constituted the second unsatisfactory in a row that the teachers had received. Two of these teachers resigned short of a hearing and two others chose a hearing. In any event, the district's primary focus will continue to be to promote instructional improvement through staff development and supervision in order to make good teachers even better. Unsatisfactories are only to be given to those staff who do not respond to the extensive training and supervision and fail to measure up to the district's standards for classroom performance after sustained periods of assistance. The district's new PRISM-modified DEBE-333 evaluation form should help to further clarify the conceptual relationship between teacher supervision and evaluation.

Perceived Strengths

When asked to comment on the strengths of the program the principals cited the following:

- quality training and materials
- number of required observations
- common language was established
- strong superintendent and board commitment
- adequate resources were allocated
- clear district goals
- program was introduced slowly
- everyone had a coach
- teachers liked getting positive feedback. PRISM was presented in a non-threatening way
- positive feedback (to principals) from the coaches was very important
- generally better instructional skills by teachers
- can now professionally evaluate instruction
- increased student achievement
- teachers had significant impact on the design of the model high school teacher center
- the eight-week program at the teacher center
- the weekly meetings of core staff representatives (PRISM SDT, and model high school directors) with the superintendent
- support from the SDT and others for the teachers' PRISM inservice.

Some of their specific, more detailed comments include the following. "It's been a very positive note. We see for once, the whole city moving in one direction. People are recognizing it's been good for the system." "I've seen changes in attitude--more professionalism. You don't see teachers sitting around reading a paper as in the past." "The quality of training and SDT support was excellent--they are there when you need them." "There has to be accountability. Principals and teachers can't think 'this too shall pass.' The superintendent has set that tone very well--it won't pass!"

Perceived Problems

The predominant problem mentioned by almost all of the principals was finding time to do the required teacher observations and conferences. A few mentioned, however, that their new role has forced them to become better managers both of their time and in delegating some of their responsibilities. Other problems, each reported by at least two principals,

were overcoming teachers' initial mistrust of the intent of the program and the perception of some that it wasn't anything new; the duplication of effort involved in the "burdensome paperwork" and reports associated with the PRISM monitoring system; the fact that the program is an add-on and is seen as more work with less and less; difficulties encountered in doing adequate observations, in some cases, due to a lack of subject matter knowledge; and a possible district overload regarding PRISM related tasks.

Additional problems, each reported by at least one of the principals in the group included the following.

- "Perhaps the district is trying to do too much in too short a period, and the SDT staff is spread too thin."
- "Rumors among teachers that the PRISM quiz was to be used for evaluation."
- "The labeling of A-E conferences was confused with grading by some teachers."
- "The perception by principals that some type of formal evaluation of the administrators was to be carried out by the SDT."
- "The lack of a solid plan for 'visiting teacher' follow-up after their model high school teacher center experience."

Perceived needs

Each of the following were perceived as a need by at least one principal:

- to expand training beyond PRISM to other research areas
- to drop the observation quotas and allow principals flexibility regarding the number of observations and type of conferences conducted ("Let us budget our time. We've gotten the message by now.")
- to have central office staff acquire a "better reality base of the many things going on in our buildings--overload"
- to train substitute teachers in PRISM
- to work with the middle school teachers in a manner similar to the high school teacher center to standardize PRISM (training) across schools
- to receive more training in handling discipline
- to improve further the principals' networking process
- to use one or two days before school starts for PRISM review
- to provide more room on the DEBE-333 for providing outstanding ratings and/or recognition to deserving teachers
- to provide for rotation of RTs and CRTs in the high school teacher center to cut down on burn-out and establish equity between the roles.

Teachers' Perceptions

Fifty teachers were interviewed regarding their perceptions of supervision and evaluation in the Pittsburgh school district. Nineteen taught in five different elementary schools, 20 in three middle schools, and 11 in two high schools.

Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

Teachers generally made a distinction between the supervision (helping) and evaluation (rating) processes (i.e., between PRISM and the DEBE-333), but said that they were related to one another, at least partially, because information that principals obtain through PRISM classroom observations are used in the end-of-the-year evaluations. Some teachers seemed to consider the relationship appropriate. For example, one teacher said, "It's a positive connection." Another said, "I would hope that PRISM would be part of it (the end-of-the-year evaluation) but not total...other things should be considered also." Others felt that administrators had misled them initially by saying that PRISM would not affect teachers' evaluation ratings.

Teachers' descriptions of the supervision process (i.e., announced or unannounced observation, focus on concepts included in PRISM training, anecdotal note-taking, and post conferences) were similar to administrators' descriptions. Most teachers said they were observed 4-6 times during 1984-85.

Satisfaction With Input

Only one teacher who was interviewed had direct input into the development of the PRISM process; that teacher was on the committee that designed the high school teacher center. Most teachers were not dissatisfied over their own lack of involvement; they either believed that the teachers' union was involved or received some satisfaction from being among the first participants. A few teachers believed that PRISM was forced on them by the district administration ("I think it's Dr. Wallace's baby.") and/or would eventually fade away ("This, too, shall pass.").

Utility/Impact of PRISM/Supervision

Nearly all teachers felt that PRISM had helped improve their teaching performance. Approximately half named specific changes in their teaching behavior such as stating the objective of a lesson or writing it on the chalkboard, using different questioning techniques, checking for understanding, or allowing students sufficient wait-time. Some teachers reported becoming more aware of what they were doing and more deliberate and conscientious ("It brings to a conscious level all the things an effective teacher does naturally." "I question myself more and reflect on what I'm doing and see how I could improve."). Several teachers said that receiving

positive feedback (after being observed) was rewarding or helped build confidence; also, they viewed PRISM training as a refresher that helped them get out of a rut ("We gained confidence in learning that what we were doing was right." "I've gotten a lot out of it because someone comes in and says you are doing something right."). Many teachers reported that a major impact of PRISM was that they learned new terminology. A good number found that useful, like the teachers quoted above who became more conscious of what they did or gained satisfaction from learning that what they were doing was right. Others appreciated the terminology because it established a common language and common expections. Only two or three teachers viewed it as a waste of time.

Teachers were also asked, "What percent of the total knowledge and skills, independent of content, that you currently employ in teaching would you attribute to (1) your college/university training, including practice teaching; (2) your experience over the years and/or interaction with peers; and (3) your PRISM experience?" Most teachers (80%) attributed more than half of their teaching skills to their experience over the years and interaction with peers. Forty percent of the teachers attributed 10%-15% of their knowledge and skills to PRISM, 20% attributed 20% to PRISM, and 40% attributed 25%-35% to PRISM. Two teachers attributed 40% and 60%, respectively, to PRISM.

Utility/Impact of Evaluation

Teachers did not believe that the DEBE-333 annual evaluation helped improve their performance. They said that teachers are rated only "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." Most teachers receive the former. No other information is provided--for example, ratings on specific criteria or descriptions of strengths or areas that need improvement ("It is not an incentive." "It's like getting a C average.").

System Fairness

Due to time constraints, the interview question about the fairness of the evaluation system was asked of only a few teachers. They expressed concern about fairness, saying that ratings depend on the principal (e.g., a teacher was rated "satisfactory" in one school but "unsatisfactory" in another), that one teacher who was "just a body" received a satisfactory rating, and that the DEBE-333 is not fair to the school system because principals cannot give an unsatisfactory rating unless he or she has "mountains" of data to support it.

Strengths

Most teachers viewed PRISM as a definite improvement over the DEBE-333 observations conducted in the past. They said that PRISM was more objective and that a common language and expectations had been established. It has also provided a framework for evaluating teachers (several used the

term "evaluation" here) that can be used across the district, with teachers of different subject areas ("Everybody is playing the game by the same set of rules. When the administrator comes in you know what he is looking for." "It's a lot more objective...It makes your evaluation more meaningful." "I should be able to go to any school in this system and know what any principal or supervisor would be looking for...We've needed some standardization.").

Another PRISM strength that teachers described was that it helps identify teachers' weaknesses and provides direction for remediation. As mentioned above, it provides a framework with specific criteria. Also, principals and teachers now work together more to improve instructional skills. Before PRISM was implemented, there was little communication regarding classroom observations; now there is more follow-up ("It can identify weaknesses and you get some constructive help." "It turns your needs into strengths." "We think the principal is working with us to enhance learning in the school."). Other PRISM strengths that teachers mentioned included: the extensive training, the opportunity to learn and interact with peers during training, and the quality of interaction between administrators and staff.

Needs/Problems

The needs/problems that teachers mentioned most frequently referred to administrators' roles in PRISM. First, they mentioned problems related to the system's dependence on administrators. They said that the implementation of PRISM varies among schools, depending on principals' attitudes toward it and their relationship with the staff. Some principals have introduced PRISM more thoroughly and effectively than others. Second, teachers mentioned problems that have arisen from the quotas that require principals to conduct a specified number of observations. Because of the quotas, teachers are sometimes observed too frequently, for example, when they teach in a small building or when several different observers who are trying to meet their quotas converge on a teacher without coordinating their visits. Also, as quota deadlines approach principals sometimes are not available when needed.

Other needs or problems--each described by only one or two teachers--included:

- lack of reinforcement or ongoing training
- differences in teachers' training needs
- differences among teachers in the frequency of observations
- inadequate communication with teachers early on

- insufficient information provided to teachers who assisted with training
- use of PRISM to document cases against teachers.

District Administrative Staff's Overall Reflections on Program Design, Operation, and Impact

This section includes comments derived from interviews with the director of the PRISM SDT, the five SDT staff members, the director of the high school teacher center, and the six district assistant superintendents.

Perceived Strengths

When asked about the strengths of the district teacher supervision/evaluation system (PRISM) administrative staff cited the following.

- "The common language of instruction, the coaching, and the absence of 'official observation write-ups' of teachers and administrators PRISM-related performance are key strengths."
- "The use of positive reinforcement in the conferences with teachers in the first year or two was a critical factor in building trust."
- "The large number of the above observations/conferences also built trust."
- "The use of a R&D-based staff development model based on Bruce Joyce's writings."
- "The development of the SDT ('We consciously made a decision to use our own staff and not put a guru up front.')."
- "The group planning process which included union representation ('The union agreed to the choices of their members on the committee.')."
- "Having the administrators teach PRISM to their staffs increased their knowledge of PRISM."
- "The SDT has become an integrating force across the district--reaching across many of the districts priority programs. Most new district committees starting up want a SDT representative on them."
- "The four clusters of support groups for elementary level principals."
- "Completion of the formal connection between PRISM and the DEBE-333."

- "The systematic monitoring and/or tracking of the required PRISM observations/conferences, and principals' growth/progress by the SDT helped to promote and verify the standardization of procedures."

- "The fact that central office staff received the training added credibility to the process in the eyes of principals "

- "Our use of principals (SDT members) to teach other principals in order to capitalize on peer influence."

- "The fact that we started with the secondary school; something that most districts have hesitated to do."

- "PRISM has helped teachers to improve."

- "The teachers' union now feels we are doing teacher supervision/evaluation more objectively and that the principals are better trained to do the job."

The administrative staff also offered the following perspective on PRISM. "We see PRISM as a means to a larger end. It's not the 'end-all or be-all' of teaching. It's a foundation. It's an oversimplified approach to get all staff on the same footing, (common language). We're using PRISM as an overlay for other models of teaching. For example, we'll start developing questioning and discussion skills in September 1985. In essence, the first cut was the generic PRISM model. Now we are looking at ways to make the model 'content or subject area' specific. The district is beginning to examine ways to coordinate the supervisory efforts of principals and subject matter specialists."

They added that, "Initially, the board established the staff development team for five years--until the new evaluation system was in place. Now the superintendent wants to continue the team to help maintain, refine and expand the various PRISM efforts, and to introduce new training. We anticipate that by the end of the 1985-86 school year we will turn the PRISM I, Stage 1 training responsibility over to supervisors (after five years). The SDT will then move on to new content and training areas and begin new training of staff."

Perceived Problems

When asked about the problems encountered in implementing PRISM, administrative staff reported these two. "The biggest problem was in training ourselves (SDT), developing materials and selling the program to school staff. We need to continually grow." "Having administrators teach PRISM to their own staffs at the end of the first year was also a problem and was the weakest link in the program at that time. There was considerable variability in the training among schools. In the end, though, the decision paid off because the principals learned the model with the help of SDT staff. After the end of the second year we made the requirement optional."

Other problems involved: (1) selling the model to teachers and convincing them that it was not going to require them to all teach in a lock step fashion, rather its a decision model and frees teachers to make more decisions in a more informed rational way; (2) the complaints of principals regarding time--their PRISM role is part of their job description, however, and they all managed to realign their priorities; and (3) stresses in the demanding CRT role in the model high school teacher center which resulted in 10 CRTs leaving this year (burn-out). Changes are being considered in modifying both the CRT selection process and the labor intensity of the role requirement.

Changes Made or Things They Might Do Differently

In the course of implementing the project, district staff made the following changes or adjustments. They lowered the requirement of 12 observations per month by principals to 6 in the third year of the program. They moved from requiring A, B, and C-type conferences (10-15 minute observations and conferences) to refinement conferences (20-30 plus minute observations and equally lengthy conferences) in the second or third year of the program. They reduced the summer training from ten to five days after the first summer, primarily at the request of the principals. They continually modified the training materials based on participants' feedback and attempted to individualize PRISM training due to differences in teachers' entering knowledge of the program.

They would also relabel the A, B, C conferences, and "name" them if they were to do it over, due to the confusion with grading that the "A, B, C," labels caused. In retrospect, they would also have brought Ernie Stachowski in earlier to help SDT staff plan the program.

Anticipated experience-based changes or improvements in the program include: (1) developing a stronger teacher follow-up plan for the proposed Pittsburgh Elementary Model School (PEMS), and more directly involving principals in the follow-up; (2) taking more care in selecting CRTs for the Elementary Model School by providing PRISM and some CRT role training before the selection; (3) alternating the roles of RTs and CRTs in the PEMS to provide equity in status, opportunity, and down time among staff; (4) taking a semester (fall 1985) to gear up the PEMS (training/selecting RTs, CRTs and replacement teachers) before commencing the training of elementary visiting teachers and principals; and (5) increased evaluation efforts regarding the outcome effects of PRISM, on both teacher performance and student achievement.

Assistance They Could Have Used

Administrative staff reported that they could have used and would like to have used in-state assistance with program planning and SDT staff training, if any of the educational agencies in the region had the capability. However, they did not. District staff also did not perceive the Pennsylvania Department of Education as a viable source of assistance. They perceived that they had no choice but to go out of state for qualified consultant assistance with PRISM.

Advice to Others

When asked what advice they had for other districts considering the development of similar teacher supervision programs, administrative staff offered the following suggestions and cautions.

- A district has to commit to a goal, a plan, and a program that have the support of the board, superintendent, and the central office. That is, a district needs a vision of where it wants to go and how it plans to get there.
- Adequate monetary resources have to be provided.
- The decision hierarchy needs to be flattened to facilitate program planning and implementation ("We get to set the agenda for the weekly meeting with the superintendent. Initially we didn't feel secure enough to make certain decisions on our own. Some decisions need to be made immediately.").
- Involve teachers in the planning.
- Listen to the teachers' input regarding their decisions about their needs and desires (in the context of the goal). Whatever their input decisions are, the district has the right to shape them but must keep faith with the spirit and intent of teachers' decisions.
- Choose an instructional/supervisory model--like the "instructional committee did."
- Use in-house trainers and train the trainers.
- Provide coaching to all staff whose skills you are trying to improve. Deal with the positives first. Give staff positive reinforcement regarding what they are doing right.
- Go through all of the staff training stages suggested by Bruce Joyce--provide time for modeling, guided practice, feedback, and so forth.
- Recognize that change is part of the process. As people use the model they look for different ways it can be used. There is a need for flexibility.
- Go to the research for initial program content, training protocols and evaluation.

Summary of Findings and Discussion of Implications/Issues

Summary of Findings

The efforts of the Pittsburgh Public School District to improve the quality of instructional supervision, teacher evaluation, teachers' instruction, and the overall instructional and educational leadership skills

of principals appear, in large part, to be meeting with considerable success. The improvement efforts over the past four years can be characterized as well planned, designed, implemented, and evaluated. The districts' efforts in the above regard are also noteworthy for their clarity of purpose; comprehensive, intensive and sustained staff development; R&D base; monitoring and follow-through; and even for the superintendent's modeling behavior.

Some of the specific factors or strengths of the PRISM system and the related procedures employed in implementing the system that appear to have contributed to the district's success can be listed as follows.

- In the planning and design phases of the various PRISM initiatives the district engaged in needs assessment and participative planning, and used R&D-based information to guide its decision-making. The district selected a single instructional model (for a foundation) and a R&D-based staff development model. Trainers homophylous with the initial intended training audience (principals) were also selected and provided with intensive training. Nationally recognized consultants were used for planning and start-up assistance. A long-term timeline (5 years to start) and an incremental implementation plan were established. Systematic formative evaluation was also planned. Finally, the district made the decision, up front, to conceptually and procedurally connect supervision and evaluation after a sufficiently long phase-in period.

- Program strengths involved during staff development and program implementation, related to principals' PRISM roles, include: quality training by SDT staff in Hunter's essential elements of instruction and clinical supervision; extensive modeling, practice and coaching during training; institution of multi-year, long term SDT follow-up coaching of principals; formation of long-term support networks for principals; the requirement that principals teach PRISM I to their own staff (with SDT support); the requirement that principals conduct a set number of observations/conferences per month; the requirement that principals prepare annual staff development plans; the extensive monthly and semi-annual monitoring of principals' implementation of both the observations/conferences and staff development; the annual provision of supplemental PRISM II summer training for principals in related instructional leadership topics/skills; the abstinence from evaluating formally the quality of principals' performance of their PRISM duties in the phase-in years of the program; the sustained positive support and reinforcement provided principals during PRISM training and implementation; and provision of in-depth orientation/training experiences for principals at the model high school teacher center.

- Program strengths involved during staff development and program implementation related to teachers' role in PRISM include: systematic PRISM I training and review, over a four year period, by principals (and SDT staff) with quality materials; extensive classroom observing/conferring of teachers (3-10 times annually); abstinence from maintaining "official" records on teachers' PRISM performance during the four-year PRISM phase-in period; the focus on providing maximum positive reinforcement to teachers during the first two years of their training; the emphasis on refining and adding to teachers' skills in the latter half of PRISM phase-in, especially those most in need; the provision of an in-depth, eight-week, clinical teaching experience for secondary school staff at the model teacher center; the follow-up program instituted to assist teachers after their teacher center experience; and the four-year phase-in period before teachers were formally held accountable for PRISM skills on their annual DEBE-333 evaluation.

The mammoth improvement effort undertaken in Pittsburgh was not without its share of problems. Some of the more apparent problems included: principals' and teachers' initial resistance to the program; unevenness in the quality of PRISM I inservice for teachers provided by school principals; principals' problems in finding time for the observing/conferring and related paperwork required for PRISM; burn-out and role-conflict problems between the clinical resident and resident teachers at the high school teacher center; perceptions among some staff of "PRISM overkill" regarding training and district emphasis; problems in the design and effective implementation of the follow-up program for secondary teachers after their visit to the high school teacher center; and problems reported by some principals in reaching a ceiling or impass, so to speak, in the effectiveness of their supervisory efforts with teachers, due to constraints imposed by their lack of knowledge of the subject matter (i.e., the generic Hunter model needs to be further developed and/or tailored to take into consideration inherent differences in subject matter and varied objectives being pursued within the subject matter).

Implications/Issues

The experiences of Pittsburgh school system staff regarding their efforts to improve the district's teacher supervision/evaluation system, and the quality of instruction and instructional leadership, are rich in hints to other districts interested in implementing similar improvement/implementing efforts. Many of these hints are implicit in the findings reported above. Among the more salient implications are the following.

- If principals are truly to become instructional leaders they must be provided the training and then be put in the position of supervising and training staff. To the degree that principals acquire the capability to train their own staff (with appropriate support), they will, in turn, then be preceived by their staff as having the

skills and entitlement to supervise them and concomitantly to add to their instructional skills. They will also not truly learn and become confident in their skills if they sit back and watch others do the training. Learning is doing. Doing, during ones' own training is a necessary condition for learning a skill. It may not, however, be sufficient enought to enable one to teach others. The experience of teaching others may be a necessary condition required to enable one to become an effective supervisor. At the ideal level, there is a close correspondence between teaching and supervising.

- Debates exist over whether or not teacher supervision and evaluation can be conducted effectively by the same school personnel. Some (McGreal, 1984) recommend that they be separate functions conducted by separate staff. The financial and staffing realities of most school districts preclude this division of labor. The Pittsburgh model appears to offer a viable alternative. The debate is based on factors of credibility/expertise and bias/trust. The compromise to the issue, as reflected in Pittsburgh's model, is that well trained principals can effectively perform both roles with increased credibility and teacher acceptance if they are sufficiently separated in time and purpose. In Pittsburgh the district waited four years (and offered four years inservice) before "formally" holding teachers accountable (evaluation) for the teaching skills imparted in PRISM staff development and related supervision. The absence of formal written reports on teachers' performance during the extended teacher practice/feedback phase-in period of the program, and the initial emphasis on the positive (what teachers were doing right), appear to be key components of the model. Thus, given the right mix of appropriate training and sustained support, it appears that a principal can be perceived as both an "entitled supervisor" and an "entitled evaluator" if the district does not attempt to achieve this end overnight. Time for intensive practice and feedback by both principals and teachers, in a sheltered, nurturing environment, is essential to both skill development and staff acceptance.

- Coaching is a critical ingredient in the Pittsburgh model. The coaching cylce involves observations, feedback, and modeling. In Pittsburgh, principals coach teachers, SDT staff coach principals, and consultants coach SDT staff. The learning and transfer of skills requires on-the-job practice and feedback. Coaching, would appear to be a necessary component of a successful program from several perspectives: feedback or knowledge of results, modeling, motivation or reinforcement, monitoring, and interpersonal interaction/recognition.

- Finally, the Pittsburgh staff would be the first to state that the Hunter model is not the end-all, be-all of educational improvement. It is a robust, practical, R&D-based foundation to get staff on a common footing or frame of reference regarding baseline effective instruction upon which to begin to build staff communication and skills toward more subject-matter specific instructional skills.

CASE STUDY 4

Tamaqua Area School District
Box 112
Tamaqua, PA 18252

CASE STUDY 4: TAMAQUA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Background Data

Schools

- 3 Elementary (K-6)
- 1 Junior High (7-8)
- 1 High School (9-12)

Students

- 2,457 students
- 99.6% white
- Student population declining

Staff

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- 1 Elementary School Principal
- 1 High School Principal and 2 Assistant Principals
- 1 Assistant Principal Responsible for the Junior High
- 64 Elementary School Teachers
- 76 Secondary School Teachers

Average Per-Pupil Expenditure

- $1,752 for elementary students; $2,197 for secondary students

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation

- Evolving observation system (no official label), begun in 1978-1979
- DEBE-333

Community

The Tamaqua Area School District, located in Schuylkill County, includes four townships as well as the borough of Tamaqua. The district's 18,000 residents live in an area that is more than 120 square miles and includes farmland, seven small communities, the borough, a major river (the Schuylkill) and several creeks, mountains, and valleys. Many people are employed in farming, industries, mining, and service jobs. School administrators have characterized residents as conservative and traditional.

Program Initiation, Planning, and Start-up

Initiation

The teacher supervision/evaluation system was initiated by the current superintendent in 1978-79 when he assumed that position. At that time, the district had no formal procedures for teacher supervision and evaluation. The superintendent introduced the system to eliminate that deficiency.

Planning and Start-up

Based upon his own teaching experiences, his work at Temple University, participation in PDE and Intermediate Unit training sessions on instruction and supervision, and acquaintance with ASCD training materials on teacher supervision, the superintendent identified seven components of a successful lesson and then trained administrators to use them during classroom observations. The seven components are: (1) start on time; (2) provide for readiness and insure continuity with the previous day's lesson; (3) state objectives, expectations and purpose; (4) use appropriate teaching strategies which include student involvement; (5) bring the lesson to closure; (6) evaluate students' learning; and (7) provide homework. The initial training of administrators consisted primarily of tutorial sessions conducted by the superintendent at regularly scheduled staff meetings.

Administrators had input into the system, but others did not. Teachers were not involved in program development, either as individuals or through the education association. Generally, however, teachers did not object to the system.

Staff Development: Content, Process and Evaluation

Administrators: Content and Process

Training in the supervision system generally has not been extensive or formalized. Various administrators have been exposed to a variety of supervision-related workshop sessions in recent years. However, not all administrators have participated in all sessions. Training was presented through the following sources:

- initial system training by the superintendent
- PDE Executive Academies
- recent IU 29 program on Teacher Supervision and Evaluation
- ASCD videotapes (Dick Manatt)
- ASCD conference
- IU 29 workshop conducted by Tom Persing of the Upper Perkiomen School District

- superintendent's review of observation reports and subsequent conferences with administrators
- observation (during internships) of vice principals' classroom observations/post-conferences and subsequent critiques conducted by the superintendent and high school principal
- discussions during bi-weekly administrative staff meetings.

Teachers: Content and Process

The district has not attempted to provide systematic training for teachers in the supervision process. Teachers have learned about it through:

- individual review of their observation reports
- post-observation conferences with principals
- presentations by principals at faculty meetings
- descriptions of observation criteria distributed by some principals.

Also, four teachers attended the IU 29 workshop conducted by Tom Persing of the Upper Perkiomen School District.

Implementation of Supervision/Evaluation System

Philosophy/Policy

District administrators view the observation system as a more useful form of evaluation than the DEBE-333, one that can be used for management and supervision. They believe that it helps administrators establish expectations of teachers, acknowledge good teaching, assist individual teachers, and identify common staff development needs. The DEBE-333 is used to satisfy state requirements and is the official document used in personnel decisions. However, the observation system is the operative evaluation tool. Administrators use knowledge obtained during observation visits when completing the DEBE-333. Observation reports include a statement that the teacher either is or is not satisfactory. The report format contains a lengthy section labeled "evaluation." Administrators and teachers use the term evaluation when discussing the observation system.

Requirements

Generally, it is expected that non-tenured teachers will be observed once each semester, elementary teachers once every two years, and secondary teachers every year. Observers, who usually do not announce their visits in advance, remain in classrooms during an entire class period. They take anecdotal records; prepare written reports that include the timed record of events, a statement about teacher preparation, an evaluation of the lesson

observed, and recommendations; and conduct post-conferences. Alternatively, some observers hold post-conferences before putting their notes in typewritten form. Later, a description of the post-conference is added to the report and the teacher is then asked to sign it. Pre-conferences are held only as needed--usually with non-tenured teachers. The district does not have formal standardized observation criteria. Each observer uses a variation of the "successful lesson components" assembled by the superintendent. Two or three administrators have defined the components in writing and shared them with their teaching staff. The operational definitions, however, tend to vary in format, emphasis, detail, and content.

DEBE-333 evaluation reports are completed annually on the basis of information obtained during classroom observations and informal interaction. The reports are shared with teachers only if a problem is identified. Teachers who receive unsatisfactory ratings are observed again within 4-6 weeks.

Organization and Process

Supervision and evaluation responsibilities are shared by the superintendent, assistant superintendent, two principals, and three assistant principals. Most elementary school teachers are observed by the principal, although the superintendent observes some and the assistant superintendent observes Chapter 1 teachers. Supervision/evaluation responsibilities for secondary teachers are organized by department. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, secondary principal, and assistant principals are each assigned to one or more departments. (Management responsibilities are divided similarly; administrators serve as department chairs.) Consequently, some teachers are evaluated/supervised by administrators from other buildings.

Each secondary school administrator is expected to conduct a minimum of 10 observations per year. Although minimums have not been established for the other administrators (superintendent, assistant superintendent, elementary principal), they reported conducting 15-20 observations each year.

System Monitoring

The superintendent monitors both the quantity and quality of observations. His secretary maintains a record of the number of observations conducted by each administrator, and periodically sends them a reminder of the number remaining for the year. The superintendent also maintains a record for each teacher that shows the dates of observations and names of the observers.

The superintendent receives a copy of each observation report. He reviews the reports, makes notes on them, and then holds conferences with individual administrators. Generally, he is satisfied with the quality of the observations. Additional monitoring occurs when the secondary principal, who receives copies of all high school teachers' observation reports, reviews them and gives informal feedback to observers.

Administrators' Perceptions

All school-level administrators (the elementary principal, the secondary principal, and the three assistant principals--one of whom serves as principal of the junior high school) were interviewed to obtain their perceptions of the district's supervision/evaluation system.

Relationship Between Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

Administrators say that the district distinguishes between supervision and evaluation, and can point to two sets of procedures--the observation system and the DEBE-333.

Utility of Training

Only two administrators commented on the effectiveness of the training, saying that it was "good." However, all five expressed a need for additional training. The most frequently expressed need was for training in conferencing skills, mentioned by three administrators. One of those three named a related need--for skills in providing information that will help improve teaching. Other administrators desired training in the observation criteria. One would like to observe other administrators as they conduct observations.

Feasibility of Implementation

The major implementation problem that administrators identified was lack of time to conduct the observations. All five administrators said that they would like to devote more time to the process in order to observe teachers more frequently. They estimated that conducting an observation, writing a report, and conferencing with the teacher required three to four hours.

A second implementation problem, discussed by two administrators, was that teachers were not trained in the process. Some have never even seen a list of the observation criteria. Consequently, those administrators believed many teachers have not accepted the observation system.

Impact of Supervision

Most administrators said that they felt that the observation system has helped teachers improve their performance, although one questioned whether the effects were immediate or long-term. Two administrators said that the system has helped communicate their expectations to teachers. One said that it has prompted curricular changes such as discontinuing a reading series.

Several administrators thought that teachers' reactions to the system were generally negative. One said that it was particularly "tough sledding" at first, because teachers resented the time required for conferencing and perceived recommendations in observation reports as negative evaluation

statements. Other comments were that teachers feel that the system is nothing new or "pay lip service" to it because they know the administration expects it.

Impact of Evaluation

Administrators generally agreed that the DEBE-333 has little impact on teaching. In fact, unless there is a problem, teachers do not even see their DEBE-333 forms.

Perceived Strengths

Administrators considered the observation system's provision of an opportunity for communication between teachers and administrators its major strength. It allows them to work together to improve instruction and increases administrators' knowledge of classrooms. Other strengths are that it gives administrators criteria for observing teaching and guidelines for conducting observations, including taking detailed notes of classroom events.

Perceived Problems and Needs

Most of the problems/needs perceived by administrators have already been described. They include:

- additional time for conducting observations
- training for teachers in an instructional model and communication of the system to them
- more frequent observations
- more pre-conferencing
- training for administrators, particularly in conferencing skills
- finding a solution to problems arising from the current organization of supervision responsibilities. That organization requires administrators to observe teachers in subject areas they do not know, and observe teachers in buildings other than their own.

Teachers' Perceptions

Twenty-seven teachers were interviewed to elicit their perceptions of the district's supervision/evaluation system. Eight taught at the elementary level, ten at the junior high, and nine at the high school.

Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation Procedures

Teachers definitely perceived a distinction between the observation system and the DEBE-333 evaluations, but their knowledge of both was vague and they viewed both as evaluation. No teachers had been trained in the observation process. Some had received copies of the observation criteria, without definitions of them; some had heard oral presentations of them; and some had never been exposed to a complete list of them. Some teachers first learned of the criteria during post-observation conferences, deduced them from observation reports, or learned about them from other teachers. Some teachers were comfortable with the situation; others were not, saying that they were being held accountable for criteria that had not been communicated to them.

During interviews, teachers were able to name some observation criteria. There was overlap among them, but only one criterion--statement of objectives--was mentioned by more than one-fourth (seven) of the interviewees. Slightly less than one-fourth named interaction with students, techniques/methods, and closure.

The frequency with which teachers reported being observed was similar to that indicated by administrators. Although a few were observed more or less often, most elementary teachers were observed every two years and secondary teachers every year. The process was also similar: observation, written report, and post-conference.

Most teachers were familiar with the DEBE-333, but had not seen their own reports in recent years. Also, their perception was that virtually all teachers have been rated "Satisfactory." Over the years, they said, several were not and subsequently left the district.

Satisfaction With Input

Only one teacher, a former local education association president, thought that teachers had been involved, through the association, in the development of the system. Another former association president said that teachers were not involved. Very few expressed dissatisfaction over this lack of involvement. Teachers in one department of the secondary school were given an opportunity to react to an observation checklist developed by the department chairperson.

Utility/Impact of Supervision

Most teachers (19 or more) said that the observation system does not help improve teaching performance. Those who gave a reason for their assessment said that observation reports do not identify any weaknesses, are not taken seriously because recommendations would be made even if a lesson were perfect, and are too infrequent. Six interviewees said that the system has helped slightly or that it has the potential to help. They said that administrators attempt to help teachers through constructive criticism, that the system is motivating or "helps keep you on your toes," or that the anecdotal records are useful--"like taking home movies."

Overall, although many teachers think the observation system has relatively little impact, they do feel it increases administrators' knowledge of their teaching, thus enabling them to support teachers against outside criticism.

Utility/Impact of Evaluation

No teachers reported that the DEBE-333 evaluations were useful. Two said that teachers view them as a "joke."

System Fairness

When asked whether they viewed the evaluation system as fair, teachers said that it did not distinguish between good and poor teachers. To some, this meant that all teachers were treated similarly and that the system was unthreatening and, therefore, fair. Several interviewees commented, however, that poor teachers should be given assistance or removed from the district; currently, very few are.

Strengths

The observation system strength that was mentioned most frequently by teachers was the opportunity for interaction between teachers and administrators during the post-observation conference. This not only provided a forum for discussion, but it allowed administrators to attempt to help teachers and teachers to react to the observation report.

Other strengths (mentioned by only one or two teachers) were the system's fairness and comprehensiveness, its non-threatening nature, and the training of the observer in the subject matter observed.

Needs/Problems

The need or problem identified most frequently (by at least one-third of the teachers interviewed) was the infrequency of the observations. Some teachers said they thought the system could be more effective if administrators spent more time in classrooms; others said that administrators who knew more about them would be more able to defend them against board members' criticisms. Another problem area, mentioned by approximately six teachers, related to the organization of administrators' observation responsibilities. Teachers said they were being observed by administrators who lacked training in their subject area; whose offices were in another building and who did not know them on an informal, daily basis; or who had been out of the classroom too long. Other needs or problems identified by interviewees were that:

- the system was too loosely structured and not sufficiently objective
- the system was too tightly structured and formal

- teachers were not informed of the observation procedures
- some teachers were observed more often than others
- too little assistance was provided to some teachers.

District Administrative Staff's Overall Reflections on Program Design, Operation, and Impact

Perceived Strengths

One district administrator considered the amount of time spent on each observation as the system's major strength. Another said that the system "is the best needs assessment that can be done." It has contributed toward the improvement of instruction--for example, more teachers now inform students of their expectations--although its impact might be greater if observations were conducted more frequently and if more teachers bought into it.

Perceived Problems

A major implementation problem was getting administrators out of their offices and into classrooms to conduct observations. This problem was alleviated by establishing a minimum of 10 observations per administrator per year. However, lack of time is still a problem; one administrator thinks that each teacher should be observed several times every year. Another problem is that administrators still lack the skills needed to help teachers overcome weaknesses identified through observations. In response to that problem, the district is in the process of establishing a resource pool that administrators can use.

Another set of problems appears to stem from teachers' lack of training in the process. One administrator said that teachers do not understand the impact of the observation criteria on student learning. The other said that many teachers still have not accepted the observation system.

Changes Made or Things They Might Do Differently

Two changes that have been made were previously mentioned: the district established a minimum number of observations to be conducted by administrators; also, it is in the process of establishing a pool of resources to help teachers overcome weaknesses. The district also plans to obtain an ASCD film to use in training administrators. Asked what they would do differently if they had it to do over, one administrator said that the system is still evolving and that he would again let it evolve in the same way. The other said he would spend more time getting teachers to accept the system.

Assistance They Could Have Used

Both central office administrators expressed a need for resource people such as professors to help train administrators. Such resources are

more plentiful now but, according to one administrator, the "offerings were very shallow" in the late 1970's. One also expressed a need for materials such as ASCD videotapes.

Advice to Others

The district central office administrators advised that others obtain input from administrators during system development and sell the system to the faculty.

Summary of Findings and Discussion of Implications/Issues

Summary of Findings

With little external assistance or expenditure of funds, the Tamaqua school district adopted an alternative teacher supervision/evaluation system that has similarities to much more expensive systems used in other Pennsylvania districts. Basic elements of those systems include classroom observations by administrators who make anecdotal records and use criteria based on nationally-known research and theoretical knowledge on the process of instruction, written reports rather than checklists, and post-observation conferences between the administrator and teacher.

Administrators and teachers identified several strengths of the observation system. It provides an opportunity for instructionally-related interaction between administrators and individual teachers, allowing them to work together to improve teaching. It establishes expectations of teachers and can be used to assist individual teachers. The system provides guidelines for administrators to use in conducting observations and increases their knowledge of classroom teaching.

The superintendent has demonstrated commitment to the observation system through his personal involvement in it. He has provided tutorial assistance and other training for administrators. He monitors the system carefully. He conducts observations himself.

The district has responded to some of the system problems that have been identified. For example, in an effort to increase the number of observations conducted, they established minimum numbers of observations that administrators are expected to conduct. Also, they are assembling a pool of resources to use in correcting teachers' weaknesses.

However, Tamaqua's observation system has several weaknesses that have not been addressed. The major weakness, which many administrators and teachers described as a serious obstacle, is teachers' lack of knowledge of the observation criteria. As mentioned earlier, teachers have not been trained in the system. Many do not even have a list of the criteria. Consequently, many teachers do not know what the district expects of them. Even when they are aware of a criterion, they do not have a clear understanding of what it means, how it affects student learning, or how they

should enact it. A correlary of this is that many teachers have not accepted the observation system.

Other problems that administrators or teachers mentioned included the following.

- Observations are too infrequent. They would be more useful if administrators visited classrooms often and were more familiar with them. Related to this, administrators report that they do not have enough time to devote to the observation system.

- Administrators need additional training in conferencing skills and in how to help teachers overcome weaknesses.

- The style of observation reports makes it difficult to distinguish between good and poor teaching. Some teachers think that reports would include recommendations for improvements even if the observed lessons were perfect.

Implications/Issues

Seemingly, Tamaqua has demonstrated that alternative teacher supervision/evaluation systems can be introduced at relatively low cost and with relatively few other resources such as external assistance or training for teachers. However, the fact that teachers have not been trained appears to have limited the system's effectiveness severly. Many teachers do not understand the criteria, know how or why to apply them, or accept the system as a viable framework for improving student learning.

Most districts face constraints that limit the amount of training that can be provided to teachers. Many of those constraints are financial. Others, like Tamaqua's, are political: the community will object to having teachers removed from classrooms to participate in training.

However, events in Tamaqua suggest that if districts want to introduce new teacher supervision/evaluation systems, but cannot provide extensive training for teachers, they should at least attempt to provide some training. Teachers need to know what the observation criteria are and to understand them sufficiently to know how and why to apply them. While a week or more of training with an opportunity for practice and feedback may be desirable, alternative approaches might include:

- printed lists of criteria, with clear, usable definitions

- inservice sessions

- presentations/discussions during faculty meetings

- credit for participating in relevant courses or workshops

- tutoring during pre- and post-observation conferences.

CASE STUDY 5

Upper Perkiomen School District
201 West 5th Street
East Greenville, PA 18041

CASE STUDY 5: UPPER PERKIOMEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Background Data

Schools

- 3 Elementary (K-4)
- 1 Middle (5-8)
- 1 High School (9-12)

Students

- 2,980 students
- 98% white
- Student population stable

Staff

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction, and Personnel
- Business Manager
- 2 Elementary School Principals
- 2 Middle School Principals
- 1 High School Principal and 2 Assistant Principals
- 85 Secondary School Teachers
- 79 Elementary School Teachers
  (65% of staff = 10+ years of experience)

Average Per-Pupil Expenditure

- $3,392

Teacher Supervision/Evaluation

- Staff development program, Utility-Based Professional Staff Development (UPSD), initiated in 1978-79, is based on the work of Hunter and others.

- Staff select from five alternative modes of supervision (e.g., supervision by the principal or a colleague). One of the alternative modes employs only the DEBE-333.

Community

The Upper Perkiomen School District is comprised of four small boroughs and three townships, with a total population of 19,000. The 53-square mile district covers the northern end of Montgomery County and an adjoining township in Berks County. It is a middle class, rural, conservative community with many residents commuting to the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia areas for employment.

Program Initiation, Planning, and Start-up

Initiation

The Utility-Based Professional Staff Development (UPSD) program was initiated in 1977 by the superintendent, after he heard a presentation by Jerry Melton, who was at that time assistant superintendent of the Newport News School District in Virginia. The teacher supervision approach that Melton described appealed intuitively to the superintendent.

Planning and Start-up

The process of adopting the program included extensive contact with the Newport News School District and involvement of Upper Perkiomen staff members and others.

- The superintendent and assistant superintendent visited Newport News. Then, three groups--each including teachers, administrators, and board members--went to Newport News for three days each. Upon return, each group recommended adoption of the program.

- A Newport News administrator (Bill Ethridge) was invited to Upper Perkiomen to conduct a week-long "theory and indoctrination" session with 12 teachers. They also recommended adoption.

- The approach was presented to the total staff during an inservice day. At the direction of the superintendent, a vote was held at the end of that inservice day. Approximately 55% of the staff voted in favor of adoption. (Approximately half of the remaining staff members voted against adoption and half were uncertain.)

- The teachers' association was approached during the above meeting but decided not to become involved formally in the decision. Their position was that the program was an educational, not a union, function.

- Community support was also enlisted. Organizations such as the Lions and Rotary Club favored adoption. An ad-hoc Taxpayers' Union in existence, at the time, was opposed because of the finances the program would require.

During the developmental phase of the program, various resources were used. The superintendent and UPSD trainer, a high school reading specialist who had been recommended for the training position by a group of 12 teachers, spent one week on the West Coast with Madeline Hunter and Ernie Stachowski and one week in Newport News. They invited three people from the Newport News Department of Staff Development to spend a total of approximately 23 days in the Upper Perkiomen district training and/or advising staff. They also used materials such as writings by Thomas McGreal (1983), and Joyce and Showers (1980); the effective schools research; BTES reports; and Bloom's taxonomy in conceptualizing the program. UPSD evolved out of these various resources.

Program Funding

Annual Costs

The approximate costs per year since the program's inception have been:

UPSD	1977-78	10K	Program Adoption and Conceptualization
	78-79	10K	
	79-80	39K	Title IV-C Grant
	80-81	32K	
	81-82	30K	
	82-83	80K	District Monies

Allocation of Monies

The largest expense has been the salaries (and fringe benefits) of teachers during training. During the adoption phase, expenses included trips to Newport News and hiring a consultant to conduct a week-long workshop. During program development, expenses included sending the superintendent and program trainer to California and Newport News for one week each, bringing in Newport News staff for approximately 23 days, the trainer's salary, and purchasing materials. When teachers were trained in the process, money was required for the salaries of teachers,* substitute teachers, two trainers and materials. Current operating expenses include training new teachers in UPSD. The district has also brought in consultants, participated in two study councils, and sent teachers for additional training in staff development related initiatives other than UPSD, since 1982.

Source of Monies

The district initially obtained a three-year federal grant (Title IV-C) of approximately $100,000 to support the implementation of the program. Other sources of money included allocations from the school board and staff development funds from PDE.

Staff Development: Content, Process and Evaluation

Administrators: Content and Process

Administrators have received extensive training. They visited Newport News, and later attended a one-to-two week training session that Bill Ethridge from Newport News conducted in Upper Perkiomen. They attended a four-day workshop led by the director of Pittsburgh's teacher supervision

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*The superintendent included both the salaries of teachers and the salaries of substitute teachers used to cover the regular teachers' classes when they were out of class for UPSD training, in the cost of training. This was an arbitrary decision and from one perspective, presents an inflated projection of the cost of training.

program. They met with various consultants. The training focused on the content of the Hunter instructional model and practice in various clinical supervision procedures.

Teachers: Content and Process

Beginning in 1979-80, teachers were trained in the UPSD approach. Training topics, in the order of their presentation, were teaching to an objective, Bloom's taxonomy, set, closure, task analysis, covert and overt behavior, monitoring the learner and making adjustments, motivation and reinforcement, retention and transfer, and instructional skills.

Teachers were trained in small groups of 12-15. Each training cycle lasted 6-8 weeks and consisted of one day of group instruction with the trainer followed by five days of practice and observation while teaching.* The observations were conducted by the trainer.

Eighty percent of the teachers were trained during the first three years. Each training group included a cross-section of teachers from different grade levels. Some follow-up training has been provided during in-service sessions conducted by the district and the IU.

Initially, training groups consisted of volunteers. When they had been trained, administrators persuaded others to volunteer. New employees were required to participate. Several hold-outs remain.

Evaluation of Staff Development

Two members of the college of education at Pennsylvania State University evaluated the UPSD in 1981. They found that the staff was very supportive of the program and reported that it gave them an increased sense of competence and professionalism. They raised questions about the program's integration into the district's ongoing supervision and improvement programs and about the resistance of some staff to it.

The staff development trainer also asked members of each training group to evaluate the training. The results were not compiled across groups, but the data indicate that participants thought they understood the content presented (although some needed additional input or practice) and that, overall, staff reactions to the program were positive.

*Initially, there were six days of practice and observation; that was reduced to five days.

Staff Development Schedule/Timeline

School Year	Approximate Number Trained
(1) 1979-80	20-24
(2) 1980-81	40
(3) 1981-82	30
(4) 1982-83	20
(5) 1983-84	10-11
(6) 1984-85	10

Implementation of District Supervision/Evaluation System

Philosophy/Policy

The district's philosophy is that teachers' instructional skills are critical and that all teachers employed by the district are satisfactory. It is believed, however, that supervision through the UPSD program can help improve the skills of all teachers, even those who are above average. The UPSD and the various supervision options are viewed as an ongoing process of supervision/evaluation. Some quotes from key administrators included:

- "We (observers) are here to catch you doing something right... We're going to build on your strengths."
- "The backbone of any quality educational program is the instructional skill of the classroom teacher."
- "We assume that all of these people are competent teachers. They are good teachers and they want to become better teachers."

Requirements

The district has five alternative modes of supervision/evaluation. Supervisors and activities vary according to mode. Each teacher selects a supervision/evaluation mode annually. The modes are:

- Principal-Teacher. The principal is the clinical supervisor. (In the high school, this responsibility is shared with the two assistant principals.)
- Collegial Mode. Teachers observe each other. Informal criteria for inclusion are five years of experience and an absence of questions about competence.
- Reading Supervisor and Teacher. The reading supervisor functions as the clinical supervisor. This mode is open only to elementary and middle school teachers.

- Staff Development Coordinator-Teacher. The staff development coordinator serves as the clinical supervisor.*

- Evaluative Mode. This mode is viewed as "strictly evaluative." The DEBE-333 is used as the basic instrument. Non-tenured teachers are required to select this mode. Other teachers may also choose this mode of supervision/evaluation if they desire.

The number of observations required per year varies according to mode, but is not less than one. In all but the evaluative mode, a clinical supervision approach is followed--pre-conference, observation, write-up, and post-conference--but the exact procedures used vary. Pre-conferences are not always held. Some observations are scheduled in advance and some are not. Formal reports may be prepared before or after post-conferences, or not at all. Some principals simply complete a form, some nothing. Some do not hold conferences or write reports until after at least three observations. Reports are placed in teachers' files, but only the reports of non-tenured teachers are sent to the district office. This process gives the principals maximum flexibility to use the program for instructional improvement.

Organization and Process

The district's supervision and evaluation process is carried out by the principals, assistant principals, reading supervisor, staff development coordinator, and supervisor of curriculum, instruction, and personnel. The latter observes non-tenured teachers and helps oversee collegial supervision. The superintendent and assistant superintendent manage the process and observe teachers. Principals are expected to spend a minimum of one-third of their time on supervision; the superintendent spends 30%-35% of his time on it.

Principals are responsible for supervising/evaluating 27-31 teachers and specialists each. (The high school principal is directly responsible for 29 staff members and shares responsibility for the remaining 29 with the two assistant principals). With the alternative supervision/evaluation modes, principals' responsibilities vary from clinically supervising teachers, to observing them and completing DEBE-333 forms, to working with teachers who are using the collegial supervision mode.

System Monitoring

Several approaches have been used to monitor the UPSD program.

- Initially, principals were required to put everything in writing and submit it to the district office.

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*This mode was offered during the first four years of the program. The district staff developer is now a full time principal. In place of this mode, teachers may now choose the district writing program specialist as their clinical supervisor.

- The superintendent, assistant superintendent, and staff development trainer sometimes participate in observations and conferences.
- Observations and conferences have been videotaped and then viewed by administrators.
- Supervision/evaluation responsibilities are included in administrators' "MBOs" (Management By Objective) system.
- The supervisor of curriculum, instruction, and personnel monitors collegial supervision.

Generally, central office administrators are satisfied that the process has been implemented effectively and has been standardized across schools.

Administrators' Perceptions

The high school principal (9-12), two middle school principals (responsible for grades 5-6 and 7-8, respectively) and two elementary school principals (K-4) were interviewed for their perceptions of the district's teacher supervision/evaluation system.

Relationship Between Teacher Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

Administrators said that the district distinguishes between teacher supervision and teacher evaluation. They described supervision as ongoing, formative, and geared toward improving instruction; they described evaluation as more summative and negative. Some acknowledged, however, that it is difficult to separate them. One said, "You're never going to separate the two." Another stated, "I don't think you can separate the two....Teachers are going to see any administrative observations as supervision." The latter said, however, that the collegial mode "clearly separates them."

Utility of UPSD and Clinical Supervision Training

Generally, administrators considered their training extensive and effective. They thought almost all of it was useful; the only exceptions were a few consultants who were not as sophisticated as Upper Perkiomen in teacher supervision/evaluation. All but one expressed a need for additional training--in conferencing, note taking, peer observation, goal setting, career ladders, dealing with experienced teachers, and in the job categories (other than instructional skills) which comprise Hunter's description of teaching.

Feasibility of Implementation

Generally, administrators seemed to consider that the process of implementing the program was smooth. Most reported spending 30%-40% of their time on teacher supervision; however, several (3-4) still felt that lack of time was a problem. The district attempted to deal with this problem during the program's early stages when the superintendent told

principals that if they did not decide how to free some time for the process he would make the decision for them. One principal said he now delegates more paperwork to a secretary. Another factor that encourages principals to spend time on the process is that the MBOs, of some, state that they will devote at least one-third of their time to supervision.

One principal said that the fact that the program was voluntary initially divided staff into two groups according to whether they supported or opposed it. Later, the program became less voluntary. That increased staff mistrust of administrators.

Two principals described additional implementation problems. One felt some discomfort with the collegial mode of supervision. He felt that perhaps administrators should become more involved in it in order to continue the program's advantage of increasing communication between teachers and administrators, and monitor the process. The other administrator said that teachers did not volunteer for the collegial mode as enthusiastically as expected, requiring the district to mandate it for some teachers.

Impact of Supervision

All administrators said they thought that the supervision program, as currently implemented, plays an important role in helping teachers improve their performance. Several said that it improves communication among teachers and between teachers and administrators.

- "It has given people a common language."
- "Doors are beginning to open, walls are coming down."
- "It focuses teacher discussion more on instructional skills and less on social matters."
- "It got administrators out of their offices, which automatically improved instruction."

Other impacts described by administrators included establishing expectations, and helping teachers improve lesson planning, statement of objectives, and instruction. One administrator said that the system has helped principals identify needs for improvement and assisted teachers in strengthening their skills. Another said that it has improved classroom management.

Impact of Evaluation

Administrators who were asked about the impact of the DEBE-333 (and some were not) found it difficult to identify effects. One said that it gives people practice signing their names.

Perceived Strengths

Administrators described many strengths of the UPSD program. They said that the existence of alternative supervision/evaluation modes encourages more people to become involved, and that teachers may extend more

choices to students subsequently. Another strength is the absence of a requirement for written reports following each observation; this enables administrators to convince teachers that the system's purpose is to supervise rather than evaluate. The program also changes the administrative role, making it less threatening and more helpful. Other strengths that principals named included the amount of observation that principals are required to conduct, the initial voluntary nature of the program, the use of a good format that permits considerable flexibility, and the lesson analysis form. Administrators also reported strengths that many teacher supervision/evaluation systems share--the development of a common language and establishment of clear expectations.

Perceived Problems and Needs

Administrators identified relatively few problems or needs. Their perceptions of their own training needs were described earlier. Several expressed a need for additional time to conduct the process. One principal said that the district needs to devise a way to evaluate the quality of supervision. Another said that some concepts used in the system should be defined more clearly.

Teachers' Perceptions

Thirty teachers were interviewed regarding their perceptions of supervision and evaluation in the Upper Perkiomen School District. Eleven taught in elementary schools, six in the middle school, and thirteen in the high school.

Relationship Between Supervision and Evaluation

Some teachers were able to distinguish between supervision and evaluation. Several described the latter as "rating" and said that the former was "not rating." One said that during supervision the principal "is not trying to evaluate me, he's trying to help me improve." Another made a very similar statement. Some, particularly secondary school teachers, disagreed. Some said there is a "fine line" between the two or that they "fit together but can be apart also." Others said they are definitely related. They said that program terminology is used in evaluation regardless of whether or not teachers have been trained or that each supervision mode is evaluative. Also, teachers appeared to view supervision as evaluative because: (1) results are put in writing, and (2) they are put into teachers' files. Another problem they cited was that the program has become mandatory for new teachers.

Satisfaction With Input

Most of the teachers who were interviewed said that they, personally, did not have any input into the system. Some said, however, that other teachers did have input. Some said that teachers had little input. They said that the district decided to adopt the approach even before sending the initial groups of teachers (who purportedly played an important role in

that decision) to Newport News, that the district asked teachers if they liked the program--as if they had a choice--but later said they had to do it anyway, and "I felt like it was being pushed down my throat."

Utility/Impact of UPSD and Supervision

Many teachers reported that the UPSD training and supervision were useful and had an impact on their teaching, although many others attempted to minimize the program's impact. At least eight teachers said that the program has influenced their instruction. They said, for example, that it has affected their planning, questioning behaviors, use of the chalkboard and other media, student involvement, and checking for understanding. They said, "I've learned to involve my students more, having them give me more feedback instead of me talking to them." "I've changed the lesson structure and the questioning." Some teachers reported that the training and supervision improved their understanding of how and why their own teaching behaviors affect student performance.

Many interviewees said that the system increased their awareness, gave them a common vocabulary, or provided new terminology for already-familiar concepts. Some viewed this as helpful, saying that they had been in a rut or that it helped keep them on their toes. Some questioned whether these effects were sufficient to justify the time and money spent on the program. A few were quite cynical and minimized the system's impact on them.

Several teachers reported impacts from the collegial mode of supervision. Interestingly, some of those teachers named benefits derived from observing others rather than from having their own teaching observed. They liked to see what other teachers were doing and to obtain ideas from them.

Some teachers were asked to estimate the proportion of their teaching skills/knowledge that arose out of three sources: (1) college and university education, (2) experience, and (3) UPSD. The proportion attributed to UPSD ranged from 10% to 40%; the median was 25%.

Utility of Evaluation

Most interviews focused on the supervision system. Due primarily to time limitations, the evaluation system usually was discussed only as it related to the supervision system. Teachers who did mention the DEBE-333 appeared to view it as a formality. As one teacher said, "It is always trotted out...annually...so that we can sign it."

Fairness of Evaluation

Similarly, very few teachers talked about the fairness of the DEBE-333. One did say that it has been abused by administrators who have exerted pressure on some teachers by observing them frequently. The teacher considered that unfair.

Strengths

When interviewees were asked to name the major strengths of the supervision system, they mentioned characteristics of the program design and of program implementation as well as program effects. All three will be described here--although the effects were similar to those described earlier in the section on program impact.

One program design strength was the existence of alternative supervision modes. Also, the availability of the collegial mode "makes you feel more responsible" and "allows teachers to talk to one another about instruction." Another program design feature that teachers mentioned was the opportunity for practice and the immediate feedback during training. Related to that, some teachers liked the conferencing because it was a vehicle through which they could receive feedback and explain events that occurred during observations. Another design characteristic that was named as a strength was that observers do not assign numerical ratings. These characteristics seemed to reduce the threat of the supervision system, "You don't feel like they are out to get blood."

One implementation quality that teachers mentioned was that the staff development trainer was not threatening. Teachers also responded favorably to administrators' assurances that the system was not lock step; they said that teaching is an art, and creativity and individuality cannot be denied. Another implementation quality mentioned was the district's allocation of time for the process.

The system's strengths named by teachers that referred to program effects were that it has given teachers a common language, an awareness of what they are doing, and knowledge of the criteria used during observations. Also, it has helped improve instruction.

Needs/Problems

The major need that teachers described was for UPSD follow-up and review. One teacher said that there should have been more post-training. Another suggested that an annual full-day (or even half-day) "refresher course" should be held to at least allow teachers to discuss their experiences. One recommended that the staff development trainer conduct a review session. Other needs included visiting other programs, observing other teachers, focusing on other areas of Madeline Hunter's teacher job description model, and resuming the videotaping of collegial mode participants.

Teachers described two problems, both of which referred to the process of implementing the system. First, the amount of out-of-class time required for training created problems for some teachers. They did not like having to leave their classes with substitutes so frequently. Some substitutes had difficulty following teachers' plans satisfactorily. Sometimes substitutes were not available and students were sent to study halls or classes were covered by other teachers. It was suggested that training should be conducted during inservice days rather than during school time.

The second problem was that administrators' initial messages about the program and their later actions were not consistent, creating resentment and mistrust. According to teachers, administrators said initially that the program was voluntary and non-evaluative. Later, however, some teachers felt that they had little choice; administrators expected them to participate. Training was mandatory for new teachers. Some teachers believed that the program was definitely evaluative. They viewed the process of observing and conferencing as evaluative, or commented that program terminology was used on DEBE-333 reports.

District Administrative Staff's Overall Reflections On Program Design, Operation and Impact

Perceived Strengths

When asked about program strengths, most administrators described impact rather than design and implementation. (When they described program design and implementation, their tone and non-verbal behaviors often conveyed a sense of satisfaction, but they did not verbalize those feelings.) One interviewee did describe design and operation strengths: extensive teacher involvement and the availability of alternative supervision/evaluation modes.

The program impacts that administrators described included the following.

- Common language and expections ("ground rules") have been established.
- Staff are more knowledgeable about teaching effectiveness and more able to recognize it.
- Principals are more effective supervisors.
- Teachers are more effective instructors.
- Teachers have become more professional. They are more aware of their skills and have higher self-esteem. They feel more ownership for the schools. They focus more on instructional methods and are more aware of the need for planning. They are more open and willing to share with one another. Their attitudes toward staff development have improved.

Problems

Administrators described the following problems.

- Creating readiness for the program. They had to build trust with teachers to help them overcome suspicions about the system. Also, they had to convince principals of the program's value. This was administrators' major problem, and they still feel uncertain about how to create readiness.

- Developing teachers' skills to a level where they can "go beyond the template."
- Maintaining the system.
- Obtaining funds for development training. This was viewed as a problem "but not that difficult."
- Finding time.

Changes Made or Things They Might Do Differently

Several rather substantial program modifications have occurred.

- The alternative modes of supervision were added.
- The content of staff development has been expanded. For example, it now includes learning and teaching styles, higher order thinking, and writing instruction.
- The training program was compressed in time.
- Principals are more involved in the supervision process. The staff development trainer has moved to a new position as a district principal.

Administrators also described several things they would do differently.

- Present the program to teachers as mandatory.
- Tell teachers that the program is permanent. Some teachers expected to be finished with it after completing the training. Later, they asked why they were going through it again.
- Conduct a more formal evaluation of the program. Review the effectiveness of the various supervision modes.
- Involve more teachers during the early stages.
- Involve principals to a greater extent. Have them do more teaching. This would increase their credibility.

Assistance They Could Have Used

Administrators wish that more leadership had been available from colleges and universities and from state-level organizations. They noted that PDE might have provided academies for administrators on the roles of superintendents and principals in instruction and supervision. They felt PDE should provide training of trainers. PDE should maintain contact with people who are experts in TS/E on an ongoing basis and share new information with school district staff.

Advice to Others

Administrators offered the following advice to other districts that are considering adopting similar programs.

- The superintendent and board must make a commitment to the program. This might include signing a five-year employment contract for the superintendent.
- Administrators must understand the program concepts thoroughly themselves. They should be trained before teachers.
- The district will have to go through a readiness stage with teachers. Readiness might be facilitated by distributing written information, attending conferences, and making site visits. Teachers should be informed of the program rationale. They should be told that the program will not be used to rate them.
- Teachers must be given sufficient training.

Summary of Findings and Discussion of Implications/Issues

Summary of Findings

Upper Perkiomen's teacher supervision system has several major strengths. First, the system was carefully planned and implemented. Many administrators, teachers, and others were introduced to the system and given an opportunity to have input into the adoption decision. Many scholars and educators who had experience with similar systems were consulted. Extensive training was provided for teachers. Many resources were devoted to the activities.

Second, the system is flexible and provides many options to teachers and administrators. The alternative modes of supervision, the flexibility in preparing observation reports, and the absence of a requirement that reports be sent to the district office particularly strengthen the system. Principals and teachers are treated as professionals who can be trusted. Threat is reduced.

A third strength is that a capable and trusted insider was used as the primary trainer of teachers. He was selected for that position by a group of teachers. Teachers reported that they respected and trusted him.

The UPSD has relatively few weaknesses or problems, although teachers and administrators acknowledged several. A major problem for some teachers was that administrators' initial statements and later actions were inconsistent, creating some resentment and mistrust. Administrators told teachers that the program was voluntary. Later, however, they coaxed some teachers into participating; and they mandated it for new employees. Similarly, administrators told teachers that the system was non-evaluative but later used its terminology in teachers' evaluation reports. Other problems included the amount of out-of-class time required for training and insufficient follow-up or refresher training.

Implications/Issues

Upper Perkiomen's teacher supervision system may provide many useful hints for districts that plan to adopt similar systems. Qualities that others might find particularly useful include the following.

- Involvement of principals, teachers, and community members in the adoption decision.
- Alternative modes of supervision and extensive staff training.
- Use of an internal trainer who is respected/trusted by teachers.
- Flexibility in the process of writing up observations.
- The absence of a requirement that observation reports be sent to the district office.

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